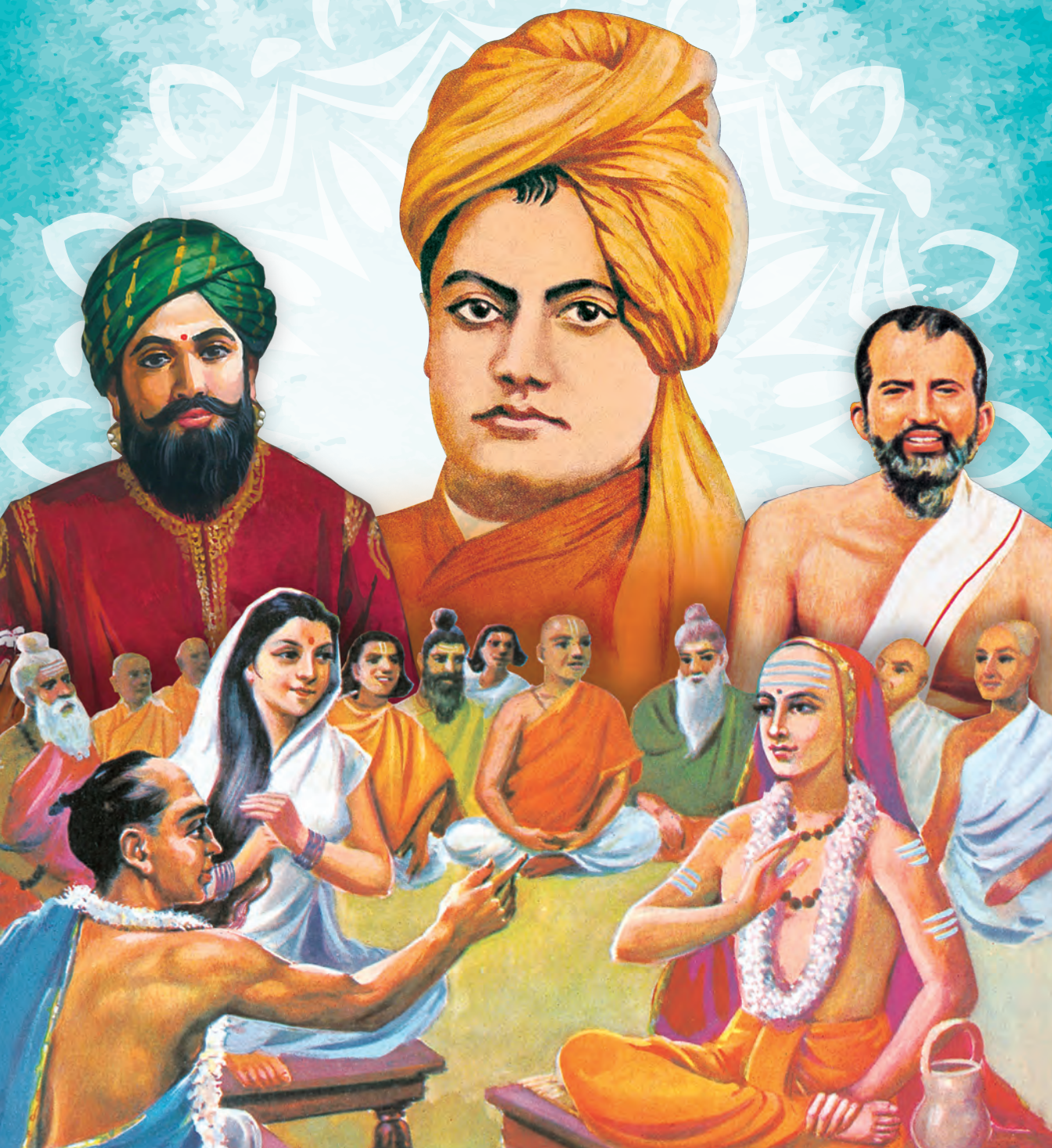




GREAT THINKERS OF INDIA

• Adi Shankara • Ramana Maharshi • Sri Ramakrishna •
Vivekananda • Manik Prabhu





The route to your roots

Founder Editor: Anant Pai

When they look back at their formative years, many Indians nostalgically recall the vital part Amar Chitra Katha comics have played in their lives. It was **Amar Chitra Katha** that first gave them a glimpse of their glorious heritage.

Since they were introduced in 1967, there are now over **450 Amar Chitra Katha** titles to choose from. **Over 100 million copies** have been sold worldwide.

Now, Amar Chitra Katha titles are even more widely available in **1000 + bookstores all across India**. If you do not have access to a bookstore near you, you can also buy all the titles through our online store, **www.amarchitrakatha.com**. We provide quick delivery anywhere in the world. To make it easy for you to locate the titles of your choice from our treasure trove of titles, the books are now arranged in six categories.

Epics and Mythology

Best known stories from the Epics and the Puranas

Indian Classics

Enchanting tales from Indian literature

Fables and Humour

Evergreen folktales, legends and tales of wisdom and humour

Bravehearts

Stirring tales of brave men and women of India

Visionaries

Inspiring tales of thinkers, social reformers and nation builders

Contemporary Classics

The best of modern Indian literature

ADI SHANKARA

SCRIPT: Padmashri P Narasimhayya **ILLUSTRATIONS:** Souren Roy

RAMANA MAHARSHI

SCRIPT: Gayatri Madan Dutt **ILLUSTRATIONS:** G.R.Naik

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SCRIPT: Gayatri Madan Dutt **ILLUSTRATIONS:** Souren Roy

VIVEKANANDA

SCRIPT: Anant Pai **ILLUSTRATIONS:** T. Kesava Rao & Souren Roy

MANIK PRABHU

SCRIPT: Vijita Mukherjee **ILLUSTRATIONS:** Dilip Kadam

Associate Editor and Online Project Manager: Sanjana Kapur

Art Director: Savio Mascarenhas

Executive Editor: Reena Ittyerah Puri

AMAR CHITRA KATHA PVT LTD

© Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd., November 2021,

Published by Amar Chitra Katha Pvt. Ltd., 204, 2nd Floor, Dhantak Plaza, Makwana Road, Gamdevi, Marol, Andheri East, Mumbai 400059, India.

Facebook: The Amar Chitra Katha Studio | Instagram: @amarchitrakatha | Twitter: @ACKComics

All rights reserved. This book is sold subject to the condition that the publication may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system (including but not limited to computers, disks, external drives, electronic or digital devices, e-readers, websites), or transmitted in any form or by any means (including but not limited to cyclostyling, photocopying, docutech or other reprographic reproductions, mechanical, recording, electronic, digital versions) without the prior written permission of the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

ADI SHANKARA

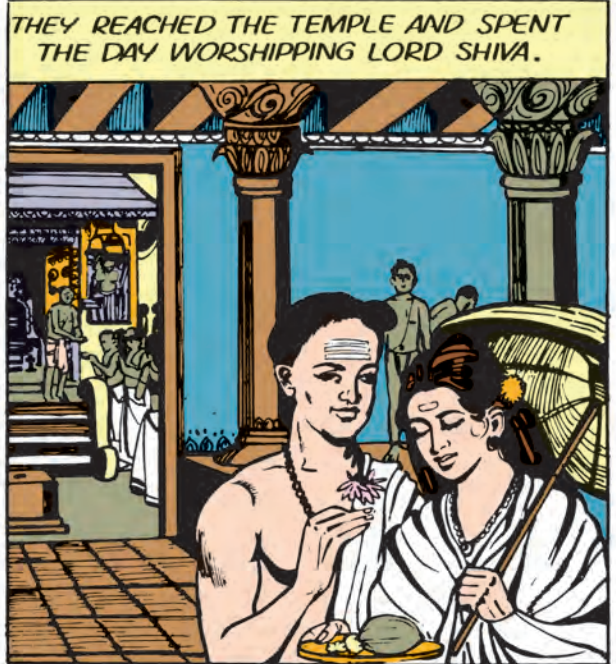
A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS



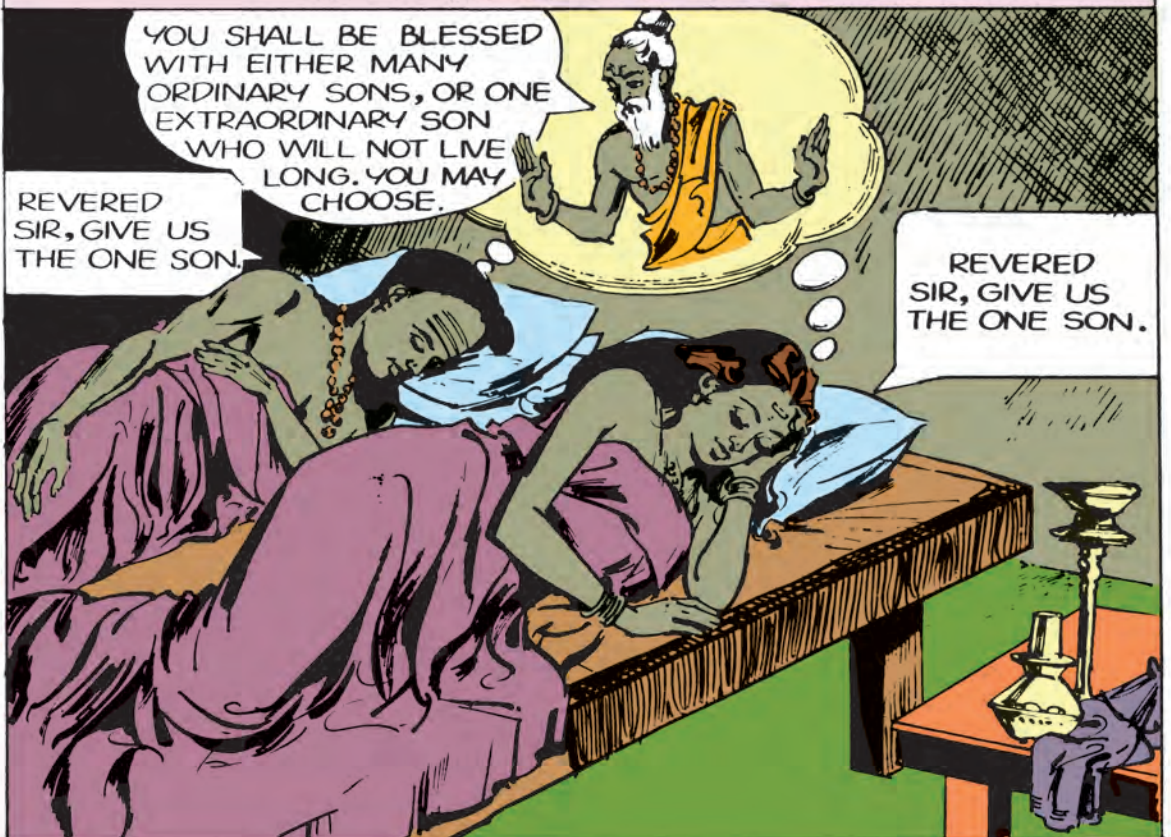
ADI SHANKARA



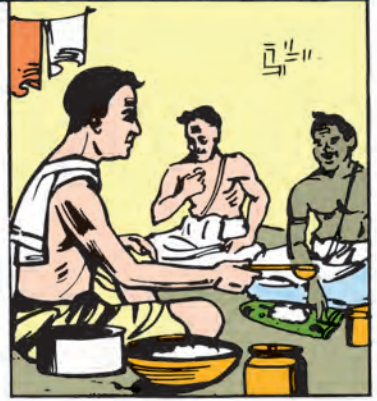
OVER A THOUSAND YEARS AGO, IN THE VILLAGE OF KALADI,
ON THE RIVER PERIYAR IN KERALA, THERE LIVED A PIOUS COUPLE,
SHIVAGURU AND ARYAMBA.



THAT NIGHT, THEY WENT TO BED EARLY, TIRED BUT CONTENT. STRANGE TO SAY, BOTH OF THEM HAD THE VERY SAME DREAM IN WHICH LORD SHIVA, DISGUISED AS A SAGE, APPEARED BEFORE THEM.



FULL OF JOY, THEY RETURNED HOME TO KALADI THE NEXT DAY, AND CONTINUED TO SERVE THE LEARNED, THE AGED AND THE POOR.



MONTHS PASSED. THEN ONE BRIGHT DAY AT NOON A CHILD WAS BORN TO ARYAMBA.

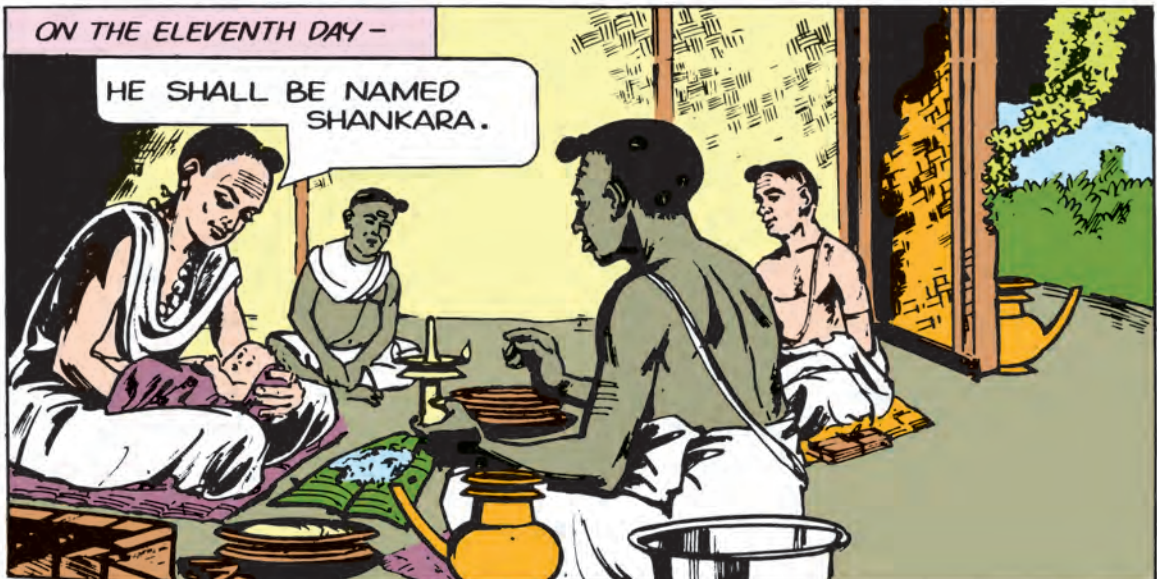


THIS CHILD IS PERFECT IN ALL RESPECTS.



ON THE ELEVENTH DAY -

HE SHALL BE NAMED SHANKARA.



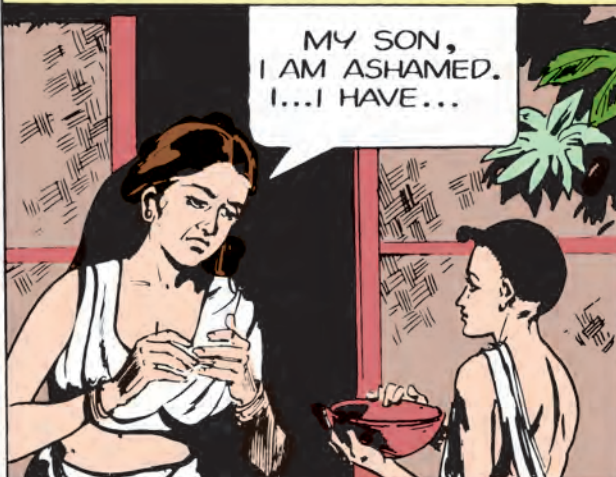
WHEN SHANKARA WAS FIVE YEARS OLD, HE WAS INVESTED WITH THE SACRED THREAD.



THEN HE WENT TO LIVE AND LEARN IN THE HOUSE OF A LEARNED TEACHER, AS WAS THE CUSTOM IN THOSE DAYS.



THE STUDENTS HAD TO GO OUT COLLECTING ALMS FROM HOUSEHOLDERS AS PART OF THEIR DISCIPLINE. ONE DAY ON ONE SUCH ROUND -



SHANKARA WAS DEEPLY MOVED.

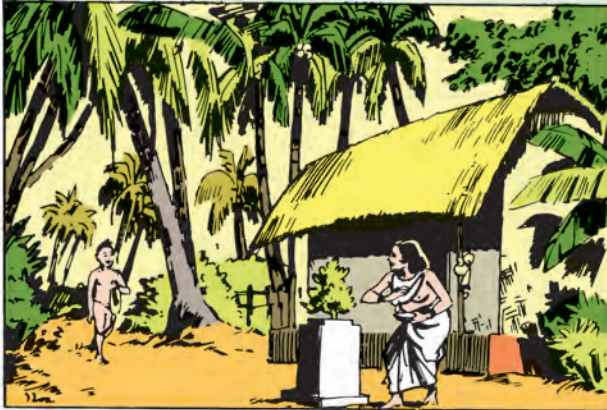


DO NOT GRIEVE,
MOTHER. MAY THE
BLESSINGS OF THE
DIVINE MOTHER BE
YOURS.

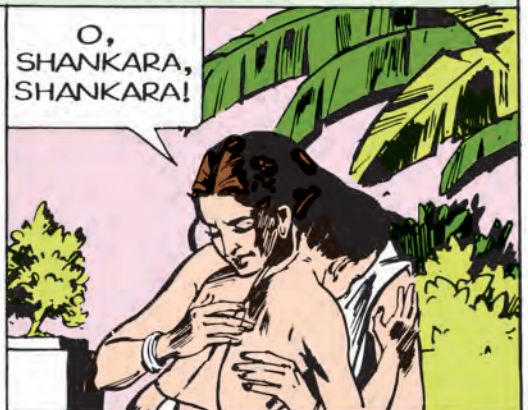
AND LO! A SHOWER OF
GOLDEN AMLAKA FRUIT
RAINED FROM ABOVE.



THE BRILLIANT SHANKARA SOON MASTERED ALL THE SCRIPTURES AND
RETURNED HOME TO FIND THAT HIS FATHER WAS DEAD.



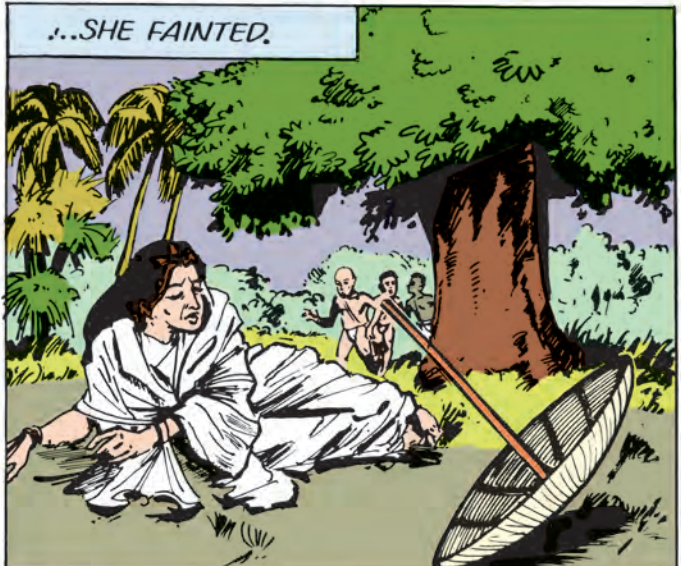
O,
SHANKARA,
SHANKARA!



HIS MOTHER HAD BECOME SO
FEEBLE WITH GRIEF THAT ONE
DAY AS SHE WAS ON HER WAY
TO THE RIVER...



...SHE FAINTED.



SHANKARA, WITH THE HELP OF HIS FRIENDS, MANAGED TO TAKE HER HOME.



THERE -

O SHANKARA, WILL I EVER BE ABLE TO BATHE IN THE RIVER?

YES, MOTHER. YES. YOU WILL BATHE IN THE RIVER AS LONG AS YOU WISH.

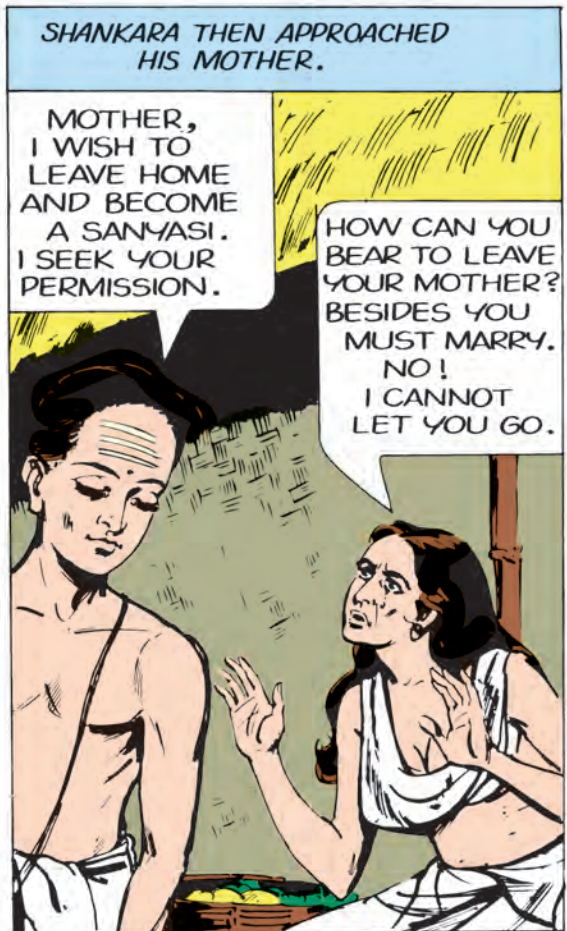
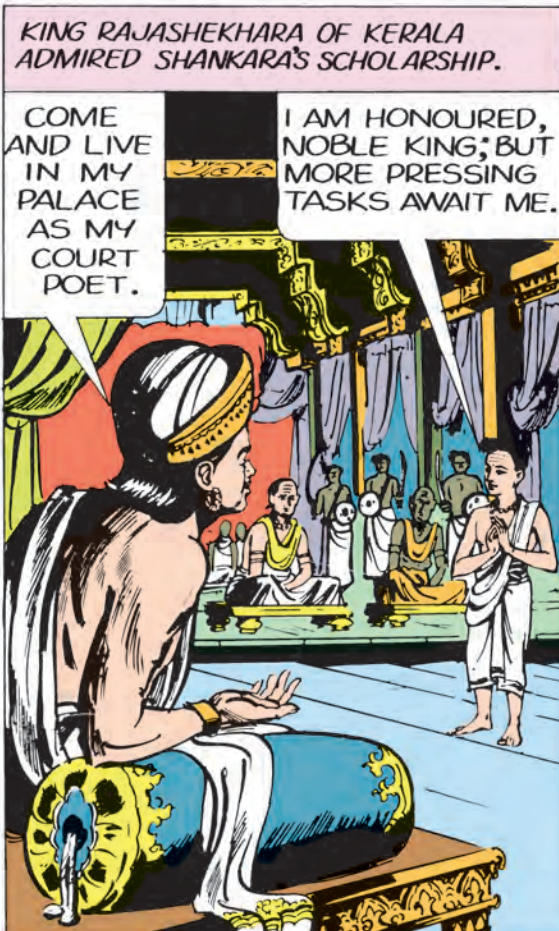
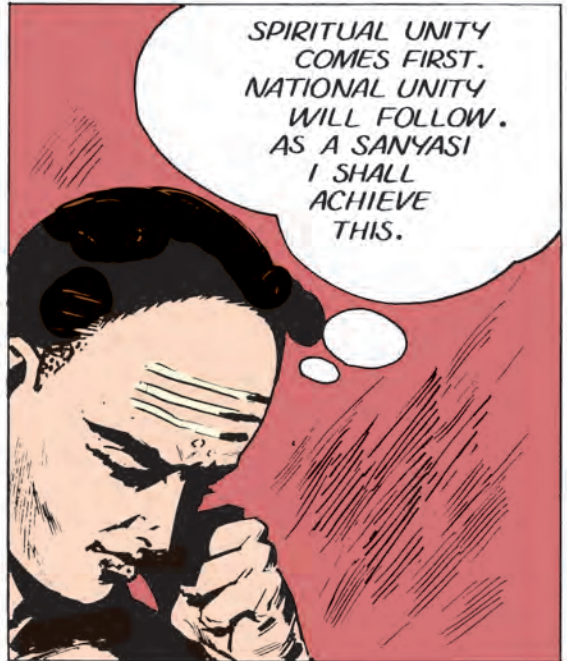
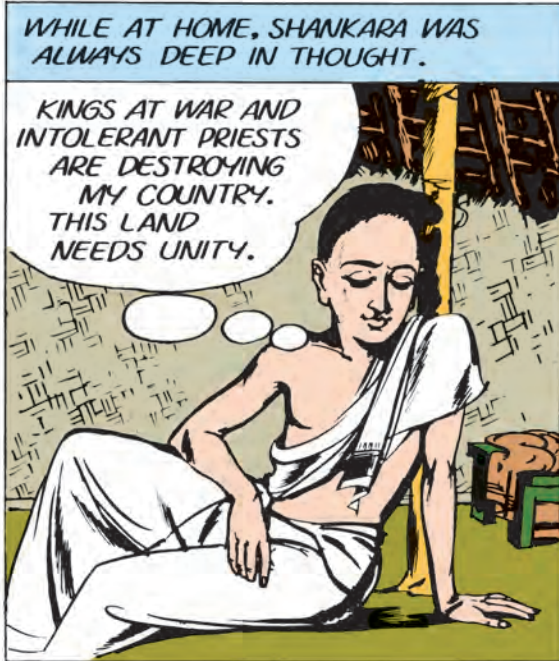


SHANKARA AND HIS FRIENDS WENT TO THE RIVER, PUT UP A SAND BUND AND MADE THE RIVER CHANGE ITS COURSE.



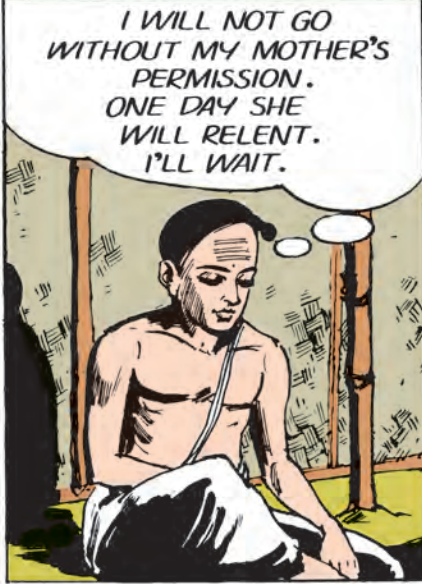
THE WATER BEGAN TO FLOW PAST HIS HOUSE.





SHANKARA DID NOT GIVE UP HOPE.

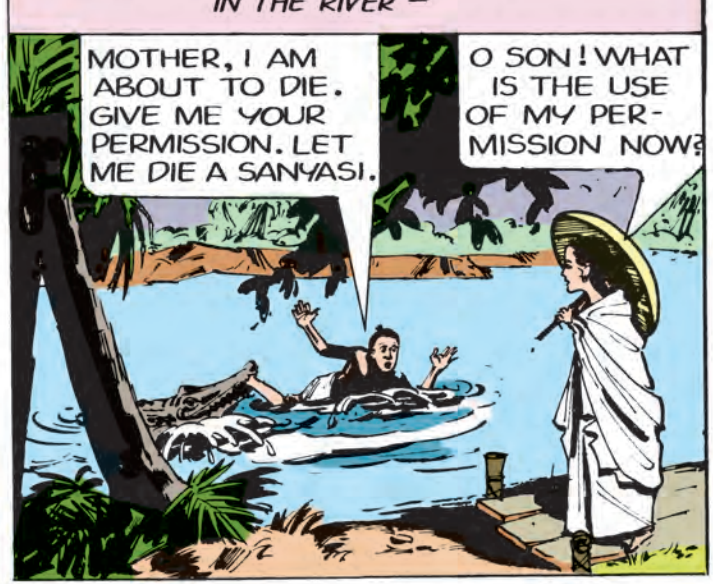
I WILL NOT GO WITHOUT MY MOTHER'S PERMISSION. ONE DAY SHE WILL RELENT. I'LL WAIT.



HE DID NOT HAVE TO WAIT LONG. ONE EVENING AS HE WAS BATHING IN THE RIVER -

MOTHER, I AM ABOUT TO DIE. GIVE ME YOUR PERMISSION. LET ME DIE A SANYASI.

O SON! WHAT IS THE USE OF MY PERMISSION NOW?



BUT FULFIL YOUR WISH IF YOU MUST. I GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO BECOME A SANYASI.



AT THAT MOMENT THE CROCODILE LET GO AND DISAPPEARED INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE RIVER.

MOTHER, I AM SAFE!

YOU HAD TO LIVE. YOU HAVE GREAT TASKS AHEAD OF YOU.



THREE DAYS LATER SHANKARA LEFT HOME IN SEARCH OF A GURU, TO BE FORMALLY INITIATED AS A SANYASI.

MOTHER, I PROMISE,
I WILL COME BACK
WHEN YOU NEED ME.

I KNOW
YOU WILL.
FAREWELL!
GOD BE
WITH YOU.

GOOD LUCK
TO YOU,
BROTHER.



SHANKARA BEGAN THE JOURNEY WHICH TOOK HIM TO EVERY NOOK AND CORNER OF INDIA

MAY ALL THE
WORLD BE
BLESSED WITH
PEACE AND
HAPPINESS.



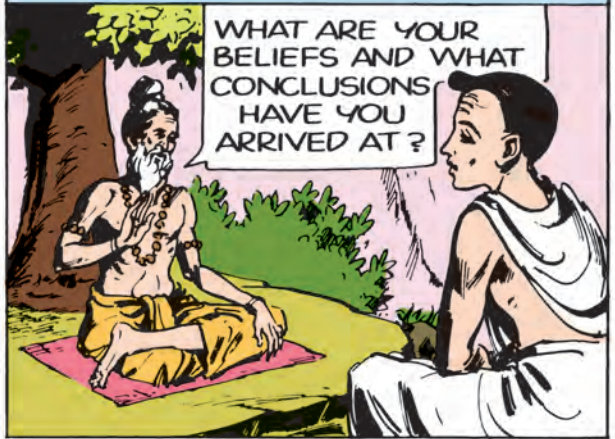
HE TRAVELLED NORTHWARDS TILL HE REACHED THE BANKS OF THE RIVER NARMADA. THERE, IN A CAVE, LIVED THE SAGE GOVIND BHAGAVADPADMA AND HIS DISCIPLES.



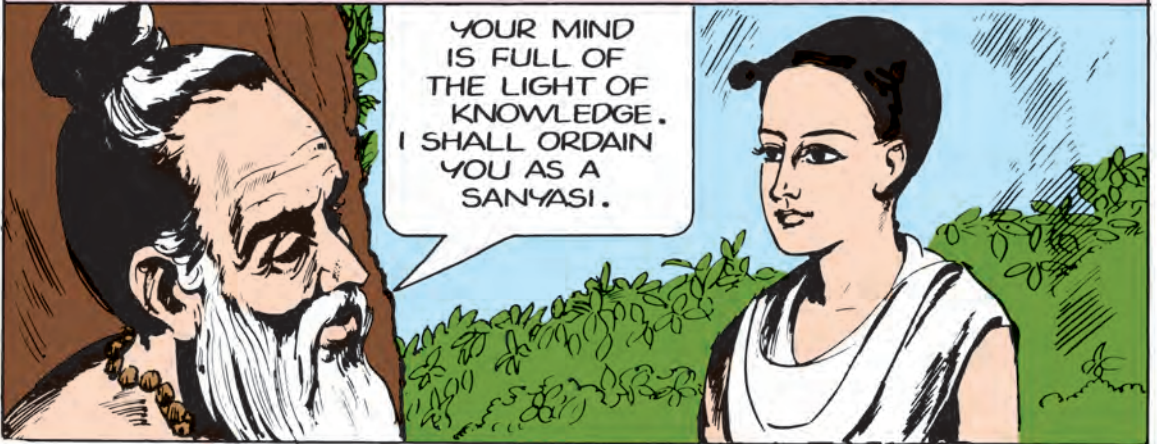
THE TWELVE-YEAR-OLD SHANKARA
APPROACHED THE SAGE WITH
REVERENCE.
COME, MY SON.



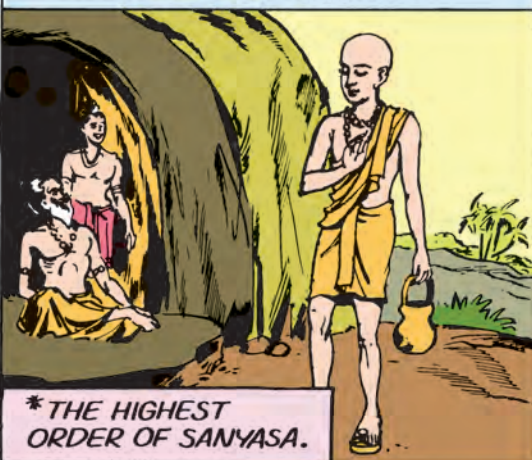
AS THEY SAT TALKING -



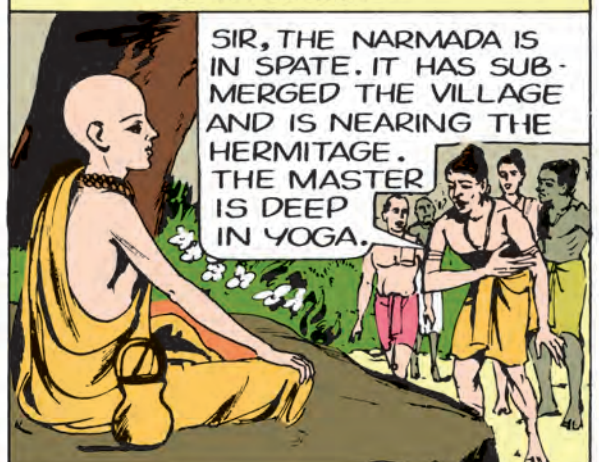
SHANKARA GAVE HIS ANSWER IN JUST TEN VERSES AND
GOVIND BHAGAVADPADDA WAS HIGHLY IMPRESSED.



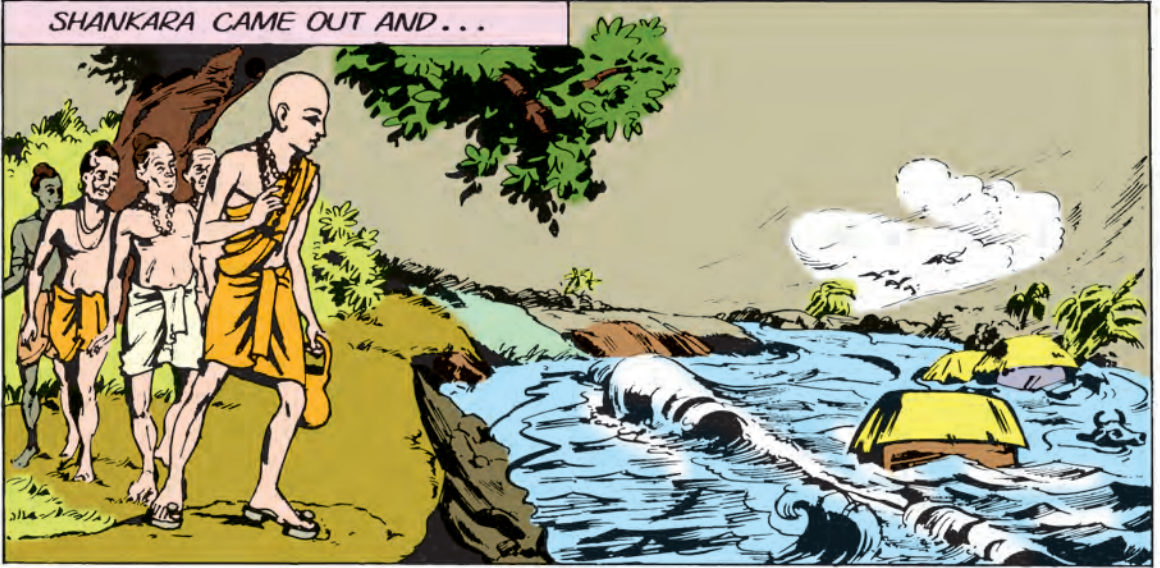
SHANKARA WAS ORDAINED
*PARAMAHAMSA SANYASI.



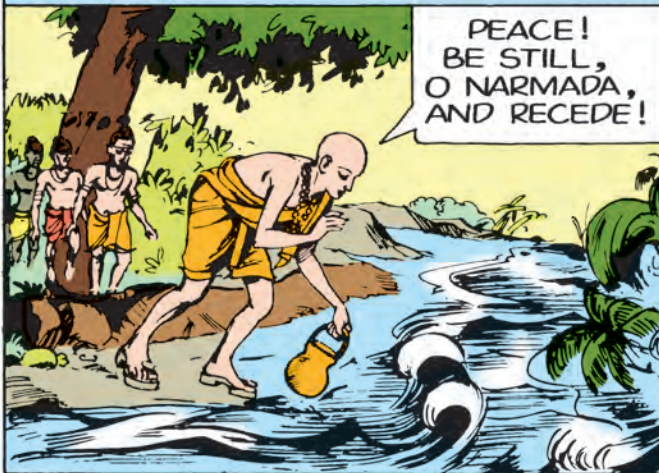
ONE DAY, SHANKARA SAT READY
FOR MEDITATION -



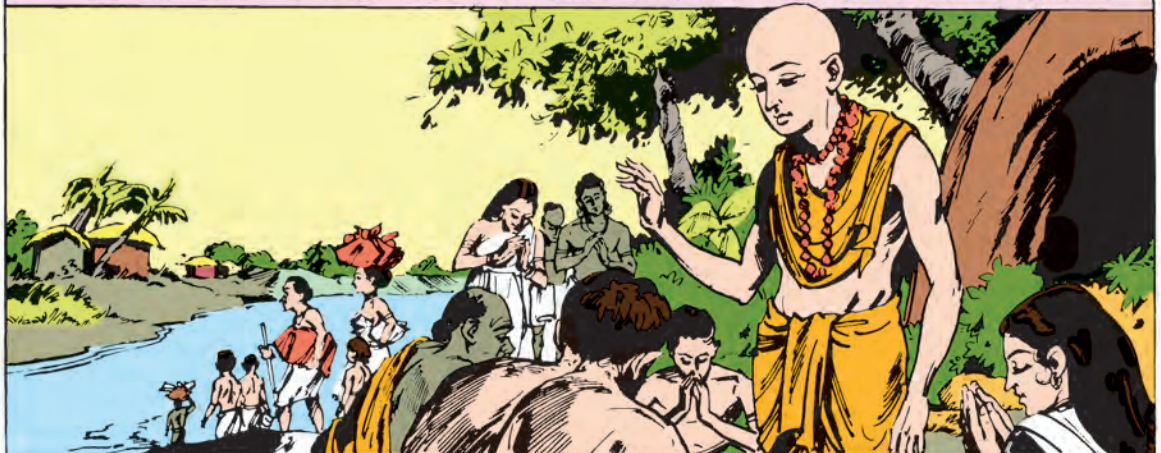
SHANKARA CAME OUT AND...



... PLACED HIS KAMANDALU IN THE PATH OF THE RISING WATERS.



THE WATER SUBSIDED AND THE RIVER RECEDED TO ITS NORMAL COURSE.



AFTER THREE YEARS WITH HIS GURU HAD PASSED, SHANKARA HAD A VISION.

I, VEDAVYASA, URGE YOU TO MOVE ONWARDS ON YOUR GREAT MISSION OF UNITY.



SHANKARA TOLD HIS GURU OF THE VISION.

WHAT SHOULD I DO ?

MY SON, GO TO KASHI AND SPREAD OUR PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCRIPTURES.



AT KASHI, VISHNU SHARMAN, A SOUTH INDIAN SCHOLAR OF THE CHOLA KINGDOM, CAME TO SHANKARA.

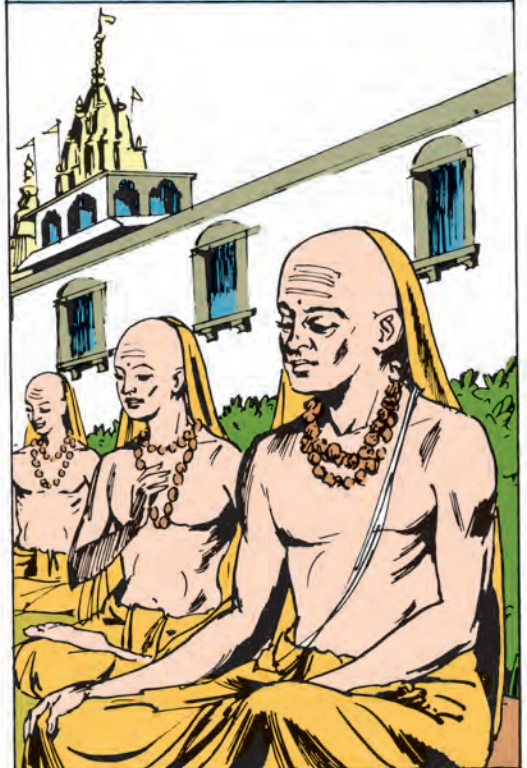
WILL YOU ACCEPT ME AS A DISCIPLE, VENERABLE GURU ?



YES. YOU SHALL BE KNOWN AS *SANANDANA.

*LATER PADMAPADA.

VISHNU SHARMAN, WHO BECAME HIS CLOSEST DISCIPLE, WAS ADMITTED INTO SHANKARA'S ORDER OF SANYASIS.



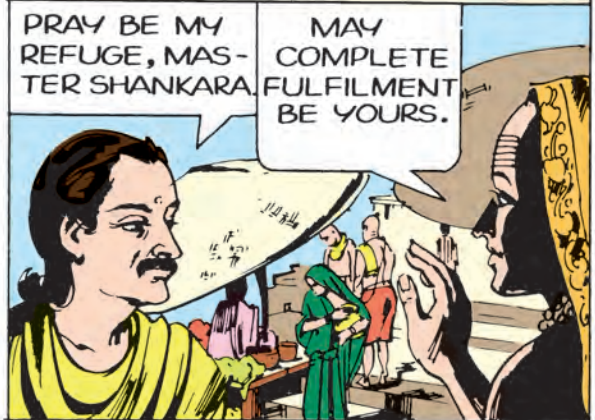
AT KASHI, SHANKARA NOT ONLY TAUGHT PHILOSOPHY, BUT WORSHIPPED REGULARLY AT DIFFERENT TEMPLES, TOO.



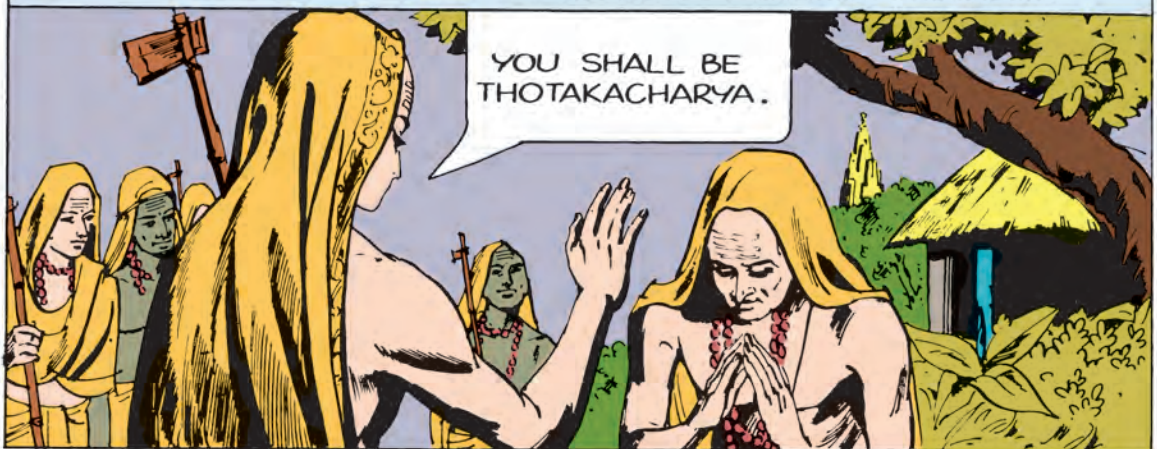
AMONG THE DEVOTEES AT KASHI WAS A FAMOUS POET, KALANANDA, WHO RECITED HIS VERSES TO SHANKARA.



THEN HE WENT ON IN VERSE FORM TO REQUEST SHANKARA TO ACCEPT HIM AS HIS DISCIPLE.



SHANKARA ADMITTED KALANANDA INTO HIS MONASTIC ORDER.



ONE DAY AS SHANKARA AND HIS DISCIPLES WERE RETURNING FROM THE RIVER GANGA, AFTER THEIR BATH AT NOON, AN OUTCASTE CAME FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.



SHANKARA AT THE SAME MOMENT SAW A VISION.



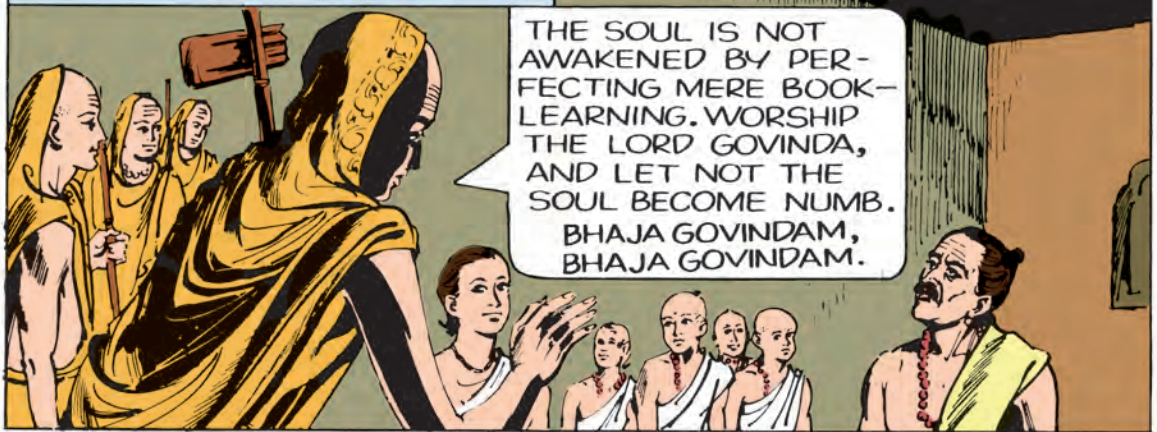
HE HAS SEEN THE ONE REALITY IN ALL. HE IS INDEED MY GURU, REGARDLESS OF HIS LOW BIRTH.



ON ANOTHER OCCASION, SHANKARA STOPPED AT A SCHOOL-ROOM WHERE AN AGED TEACHER TAUGHT GRAMMAR, DAY AFTER DAY.

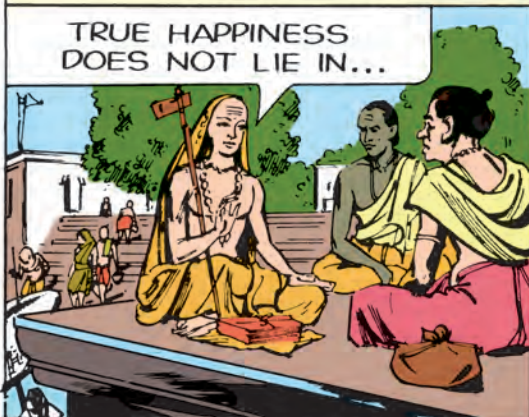


SHANKARA SPOKE TO THE TEACHER.



THROUGHOUT HIS STAY AT KASHI, SHANKARA MET SAGES AND DISCUSSED AND DEFINED HINDUISM WITH THEM.

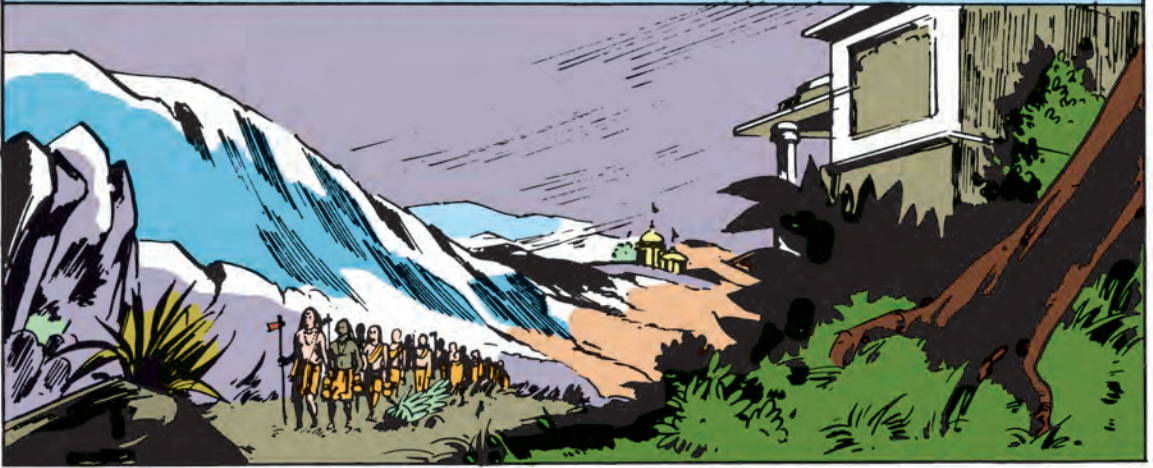
TRUE HAPPINESS DOES NOT LIE IN...



...PRACTISING MERE RITUALS. IT LIES IN UNDERSTANDING THE PRESENCE OF THE ONE REALITY IN ALL.



AT LAST HE DECIDED TO LEAVE KASHI AND WENT NORTH ON HIS MISSION OF PEACE AND UNITY, TO HARIDWAR AND THEN TO RISHIKESH.



AT RISHIKESH WHEN HE WENT TO THE TEMPLE TO WORSHIP —

WHERE IS THE SACRED IDOL?

MASTER, WE HAD HIDDEN IT IN THE RIVER GANGA TO SAVE IT FROM THE RAIDS OF THE HILL-TRIBES. NOW WE CANNOT FIND IT.



SHANKARA WENT TO THE BANKS OF THE GANGA AND —

GO, LOOK FOR THE IDOL AGAIN!

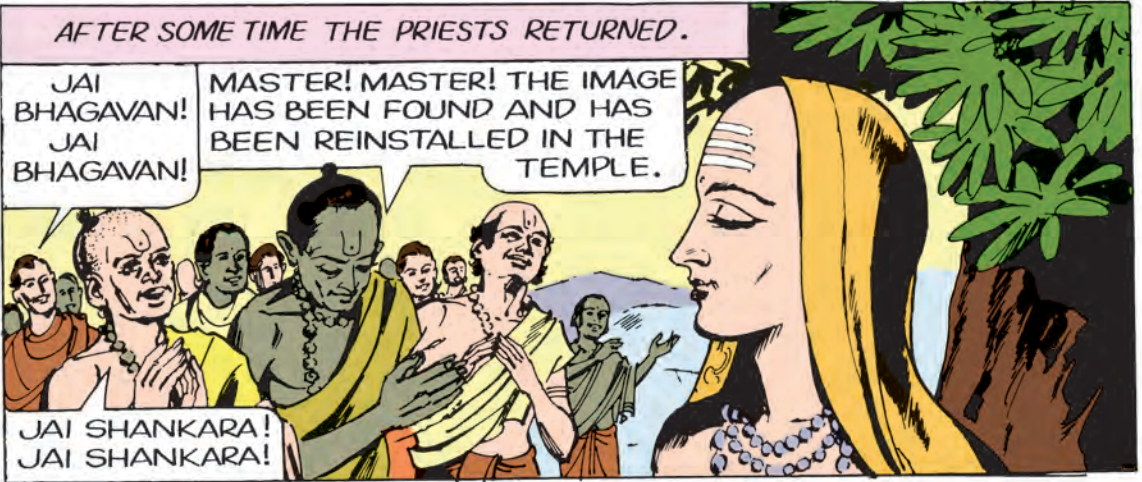


AFTER SOME TIME THE PRIESTS RETURNED.

JAI BHAGAVAN!
JAI BHAGAVAN!

MASTER! MASTER! THE IMAGE
HAS BEEN FOUND AND HAS
BEEN REINSTALLED IN THE
TEMPLE.

JAI SHANKARA!
JAI SHANKARA!



SHANKARA NEXT WENT TO THE HILL-TRIBES AND TALKED TO THEM
ABOUT REFORMING THEIR WAYS.

STOP! CEASE YOUR EVIL
WAYS AND TRY TO SEEK
TRUE HAPPINESS WHICH
LIES IN THE ONE REALITY.



MANY OF THEM WERE REFORMED AND FOLLOWED HIM AS HE PROCEEDED TO BADRINATH.



AT BADRINATH TOO THE IDOL IN THE TEMPLE WAS MISSING.

MASTER,
HELP US FIND
THE IDOL .

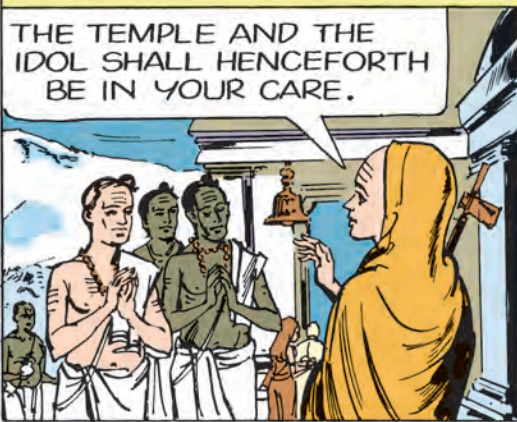


SHANKARA FOUND THE IDOL AND HIMSELF
INSTALLED IT IN THE TEMPLE
WITH DUE CEREMONY.



THEN CALLING FORTH A FEW
NAMBUDIRIS FROM KERALA —

THE TEMPLE AND THE
IDOL SHALL HENCEFORTH
BE IN YOUR CARE.



SHANKARA THEN WALKED WESTWARD
THROUGH THE HIMALAYAS TO KEDARNATH
AND AMARNATH.



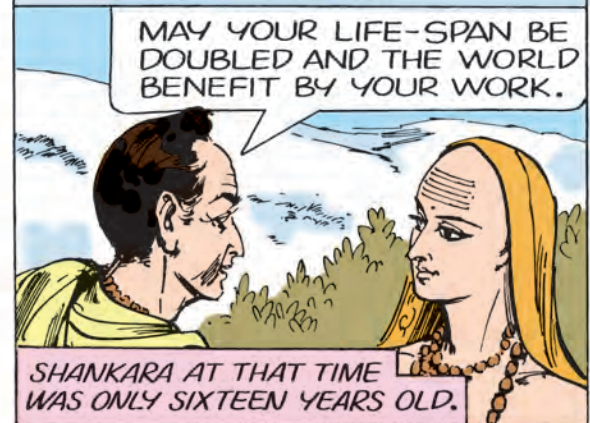
FROM THERE HE WENT FURTHER NORTH
TO GANGOTRI AND UTTARA KASHI,
WHERE HE WAS VISITED BY A SAGE.

I HAVE COME FOR SOME
CLARIFICATION ON VEDAN-
TIC TEACHINGS.



FOR SEVEN LONG DAYS THEY
DISCUSSED HIS DOUBTS. AT THE
END OF THE SESSION —

MAY YOUR LIFE-SPAN BE
DOUBLED AND THE WORLD
BENEFIT BY YOUR WORK.



SHANKARA AT THAT TIME
WAS ONLY SIXTEEN YEARS OLD.

SHANKARA AND HIS DISCIPLES THEN RETURNED TO BADRINATH AND LIVED THERE FOR SOME TIME.



ONE DAY SHANKARA CALLED OUT TO HIS DISCIPLE SANANDANA WHO WAS ON THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE GANGA.

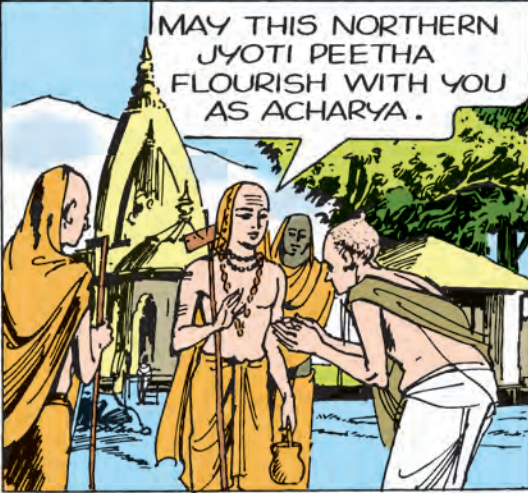


SANANDANA WALKED STRAIGHT OVER THE RIVER AND LO! LOTUSES SPRANG UP BENEATH HIS FEET TO SUPPORT HIM ON THE WATER.

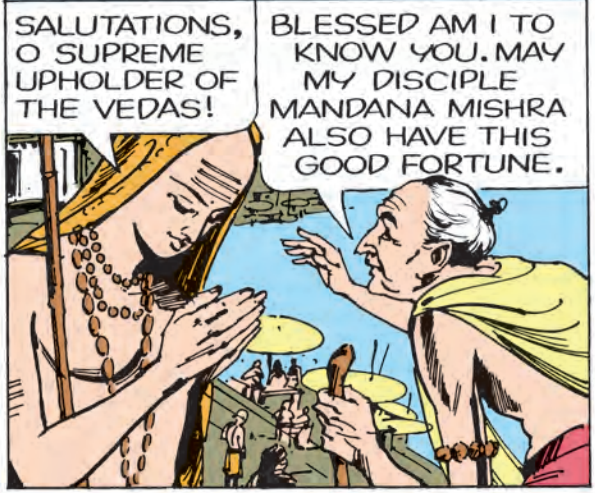


SUCH WAS THE FAITH OF SANANDANA IN SHANKARA.

AT BADRINATH SHANKARA FOUNDED THE JYOTI MATH AND APPOINTED THOTAKACHARYA AS ITS HEAD.



SHANKARA THEN RETURNED TO KASHI. THERE, AT PRAYAG, HE MET KUMARILA BHATTA, THE PURE RITUALIST.



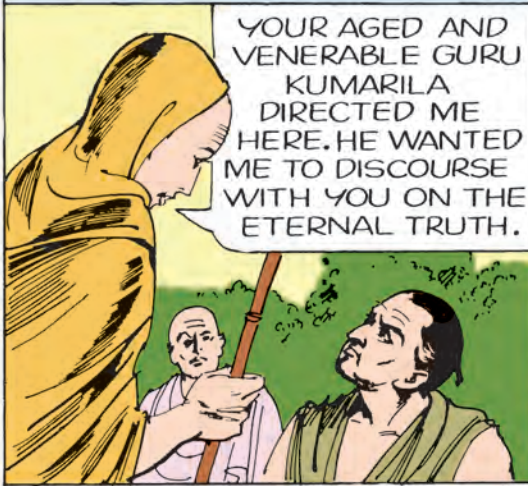
BUT KUMARILA WAS OLD AND ABOUT TO GIVE UP HIS LIFE. SO —



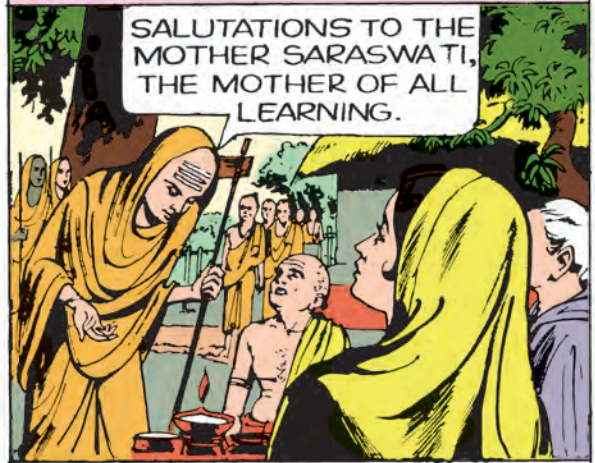
SHANKARA TRAVELLED TO MAHISHMATI WHERE MANDANA MISHRA LIVED. BUT MANDANA WAS NOT HAPPY TO SEE HIM.



SHANKARA WAS UNPERTURBED.



SHANKARA THEN TURNED TO MANDANA'S WIFE, SARASWATI.



IF IT IS MY GURU'S WISH, WE WILL BEGIN DISCUSSIONS STRAIGHT-AWAY.



HE, WHO FAILS TO DEFEND HIS OWN BELIEFS, MUST ACCEPT THE OTHER'S CREED. SARASWATI HERSELF SHALL BE THE JUDGE.



BUT SARASWATI INTERVENED.

HOW CAN A SANYASI, WHO HAS NO EXPERIENCE AS A CITIZEN AND A HOUSEHOLDER, CLAIM COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE?



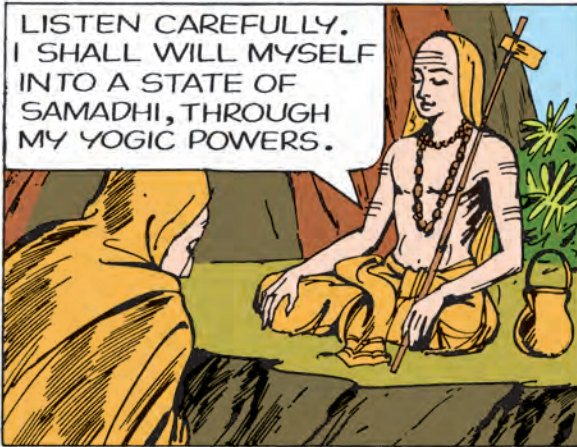
SHANKARA THEN LEFT HIS AMAZED DISCIPLES AND WENT TO A SECLUDED SPOT AMONG THE HILLS. THERE HE TURNED TO FACE THE FAITHFUL PADMAPADA.

MASTER, ISN'T MOTHER SARASWATI WRONG? IN WHAT WAY CAN THE EXPERIENCES OF A CITIZEN AND A HOUSEHOLDER HELP IN THE SEARCH FOR WISDOM? THEY ARE, IN FACT, OBSTACLES TO SPIRITUAL PERFECTION.

NO, PADMAPADA. SPIRITUAL PERFECTION MUST BE ATTAINED IN THE BATTLEFIELD OF LIFE ITSELF.



LISTEN CAREFULLY. I SHALL WILL MYSELF INTO A STATE OF SAMADHI, THROUGH MY YOGIC POWERS.

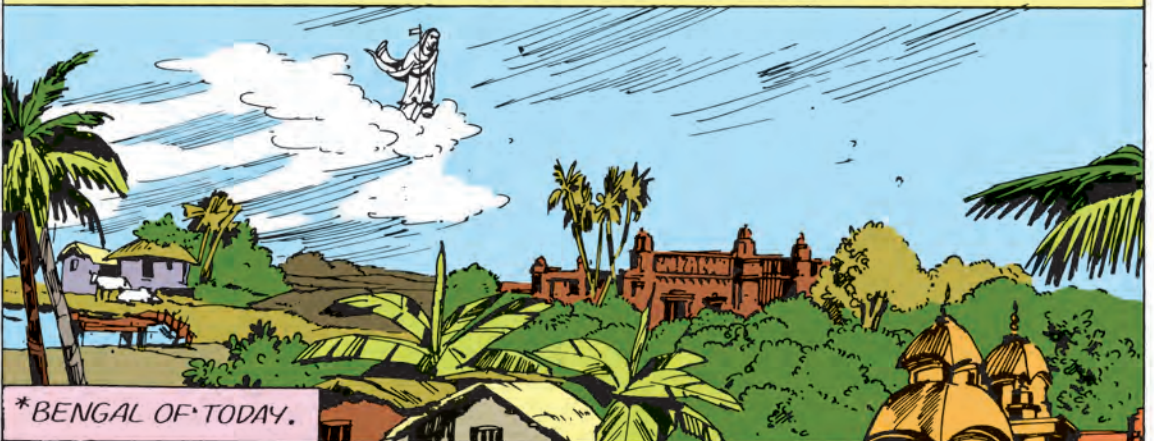


SHANKARA ASSUMED A YOGIC POSTURE.

MY SOUL TAKES FLIGHT TO ANOTHER BODY. TILL ITS RETURN GUARD MY OWN.



SHANKARA'S SOUL TRAVELLED TO A TOWN IN *VANGA-DESHA.



*BENGAL OF TODAY.

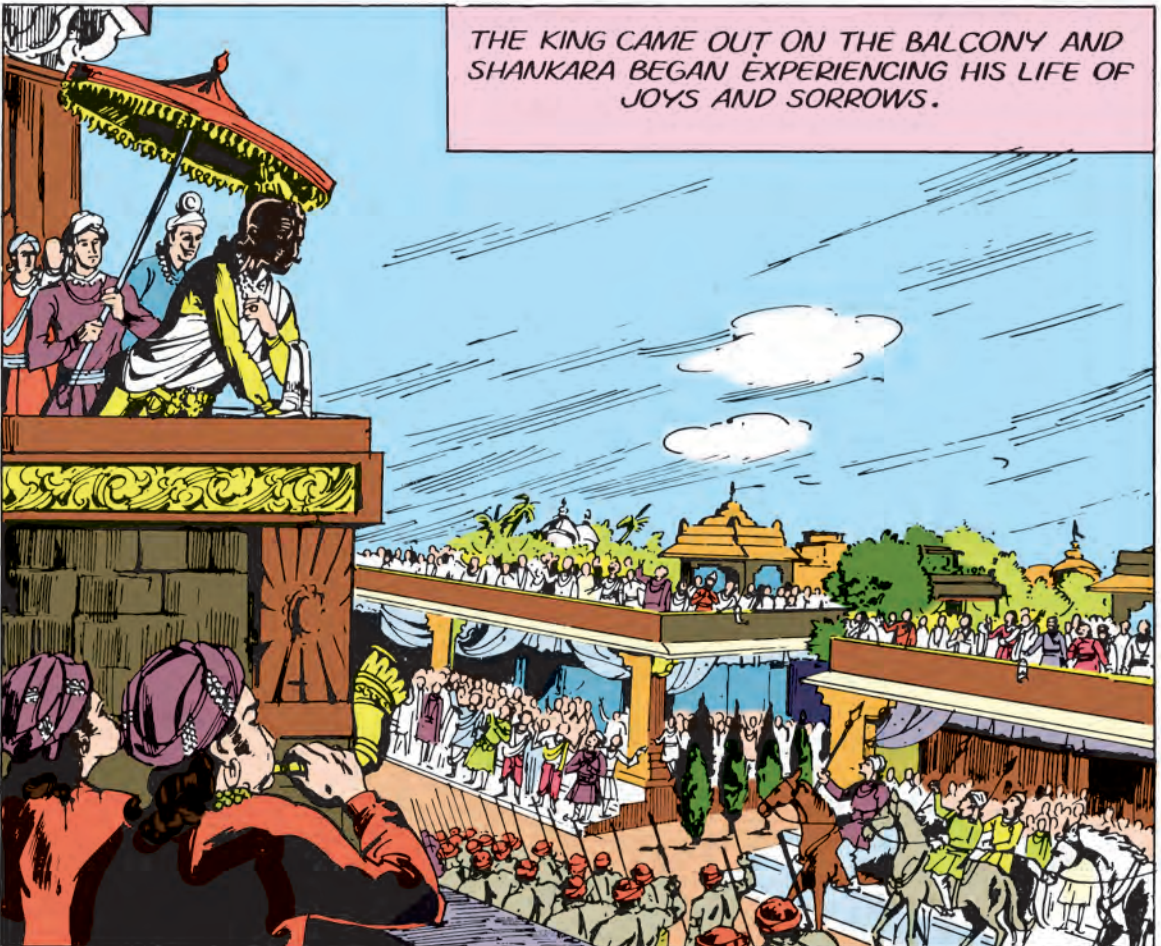
THERE, IT BROUGHT TO LIFE THE KING OF VANGA DESHA, WHO WAS ON HIS DEATHBED.

THE KING IS WELL. IT IS OUR GOOD FORTUNE.

GOD HAS BEEN GOOD TO US. REWARD THE DOCTORS AND ALL ATTENDANTS.



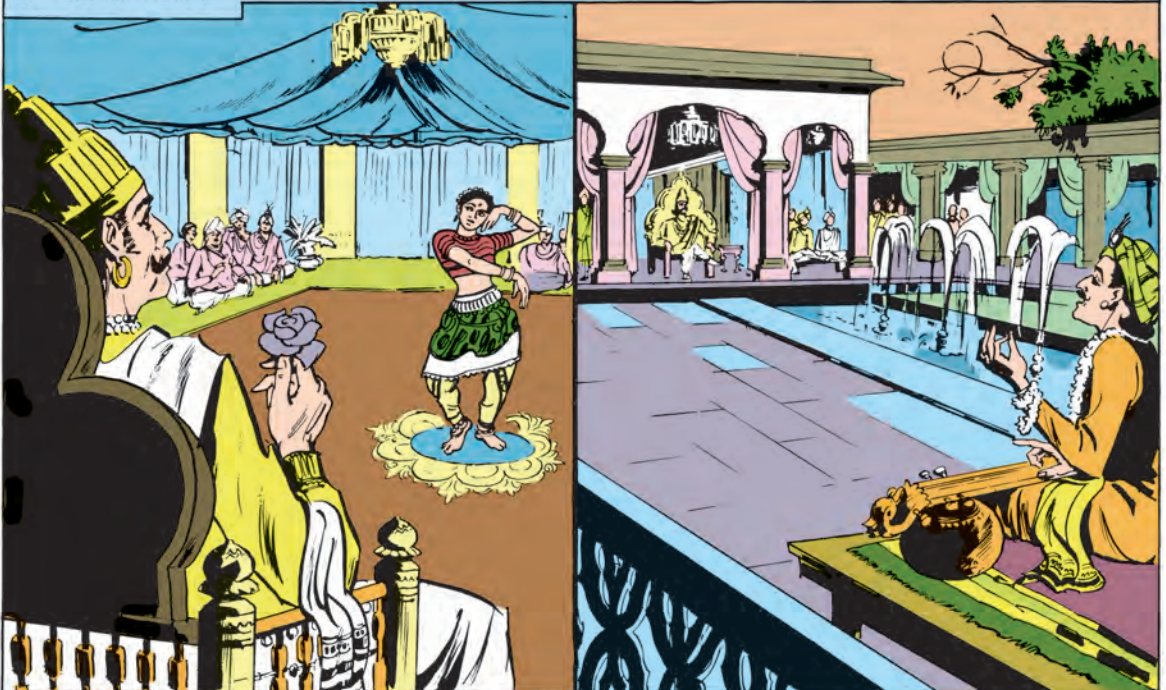
THE KING CAME OUT ON THE BALCONY AND SHANKARA BEGAN EXPERIENCING HIS LIFE OF JOYS AND SORROWS.



SHANKARA EXPERIENCED THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORRIES OF A KING. THE FORTS HAD TO BE GUARDED, THE KINGDOM DEFENDED AND THE EVIL-DOERS PUNISHED.



AT SEVERAL GLITTERING DURBARS, HE EXPERIENCED THE JOYS AND LUXURIES OF LIFE TOO.



WHEN SHANKARA HAD GATHERED ENOUGH EXPERIENCE OF A WORLDLY LIFE, ITS GOOD AND EVIL —

I SHALL NOW RETURN TO SARASWA I AND MY DEBATE WITH MANDANA MISHRA.



SO SHANKARA'S SPIRIT LEFT THE KING'S BODY...



...AND RE-ENTERED HIS OWN.

MAY YOU BE BLESSED FOR YOUR DEVOTION AND LOYALTY.

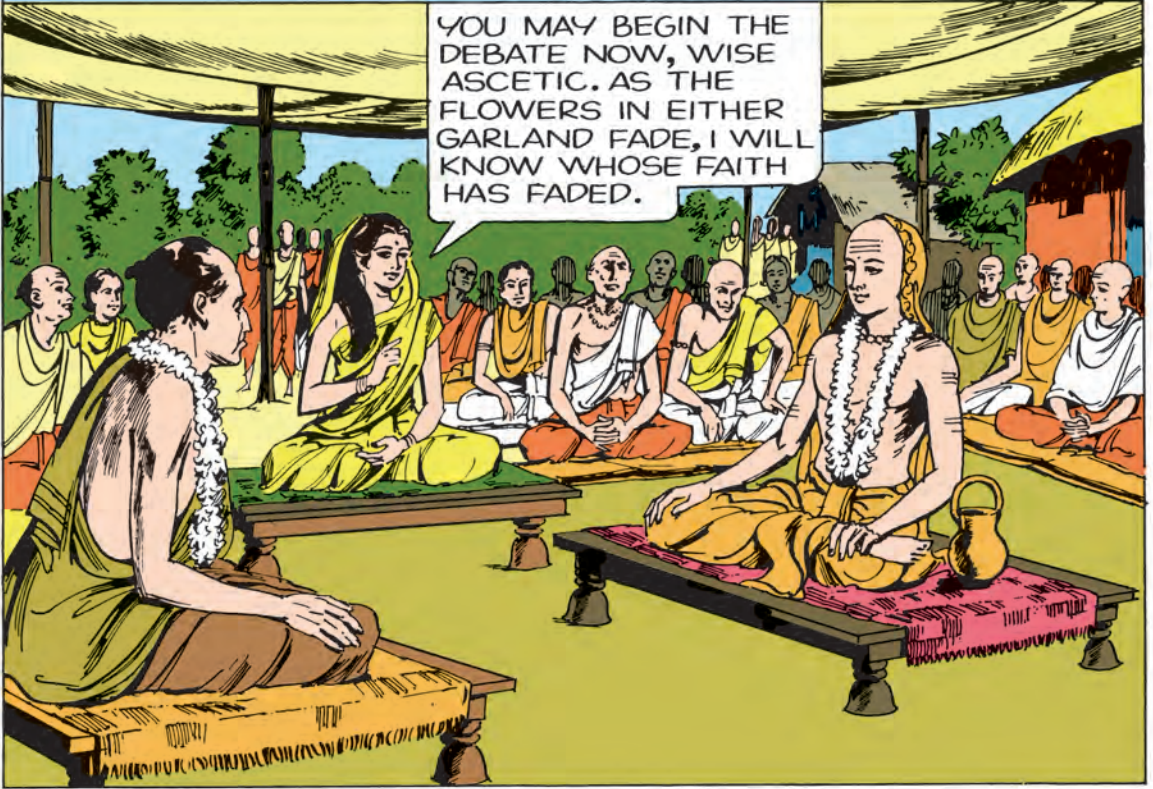


SHANKARA THEN LEFT PADMAPADA AND RETURNED TO PRESENT HIMSELF BEFORE MANDANA MISHRA.



ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE FOR THE TWO SCHOLARS TO BEGIN.

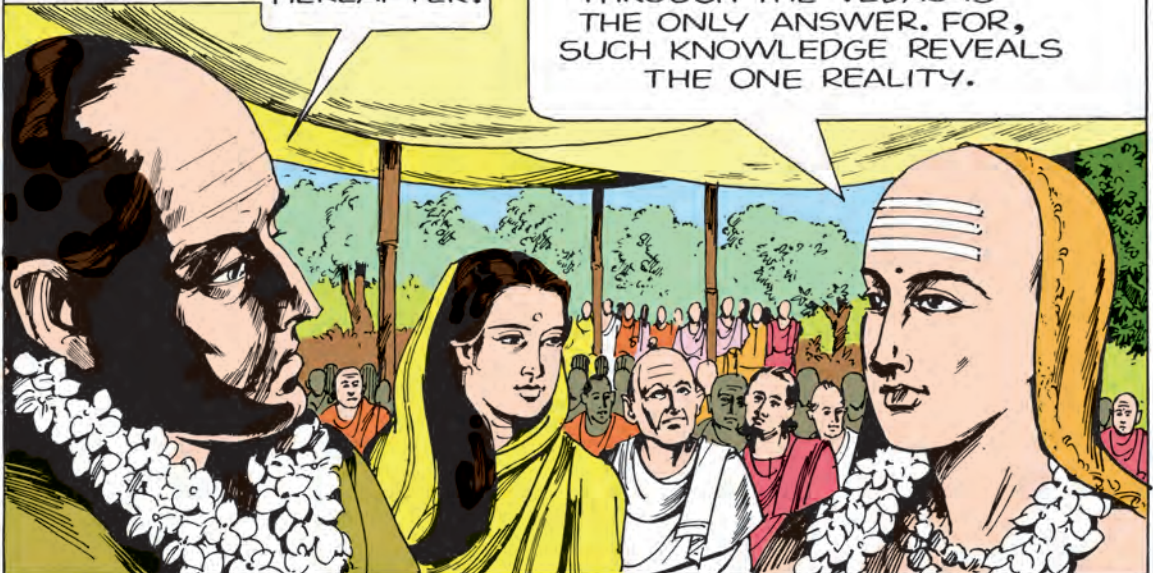
YOU MAY BEGIN THE DEBATE NOW, WISE ASCETIC. AS THE FLOWERS IN EITHER GARLAND FADE, I WILL KNOW WHOSE FAITH HAS FADED.



THE DEBATE WENT ON FOR A FEW DAYS. THEN –

I HOLD THAT WORSHIP AND RITUALS MAKE FOR HAPPINESS HERE AND HEREAFTER.

RITUALS DO NOT BRING THE HIGHEST HAPPINESS. COMPLETE KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THE VEDAS IS THE ONLY ANSWER. FOR, SUCH KNOWLEDGE REVEALS THE ONE REALITY.



AT THAT MOMENT THE FLOWERS IN MANDANA'S GARLAND WILTED AND FADED.

YOU WIN, VENERABLE ASCETIC. I AM YOUR HUMBLE DISCIPLE.



MANDANA WAS ORDAINED.

YOUR MONASTIC NAME SHALL BE SURESHWARACHARYA.



SHANKARA, ACCOMPANIED BY SURESHWARACHARYA AND SARASWATI, THEN TURNED SOUTH, HALTING AT ALL THE HOLY PLACES ON THE WAY, TILL...

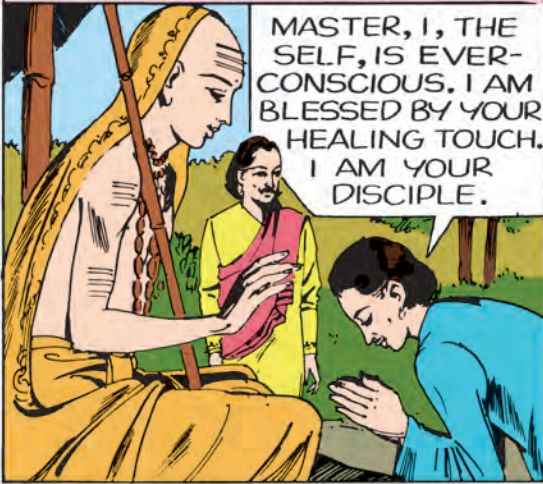


...THEY REACHED GOKARNA. THERE A RICH AND RESPECTED MAN FROM A TOWN NEARBY CAME WITH HIS SON TO SHANKARA.

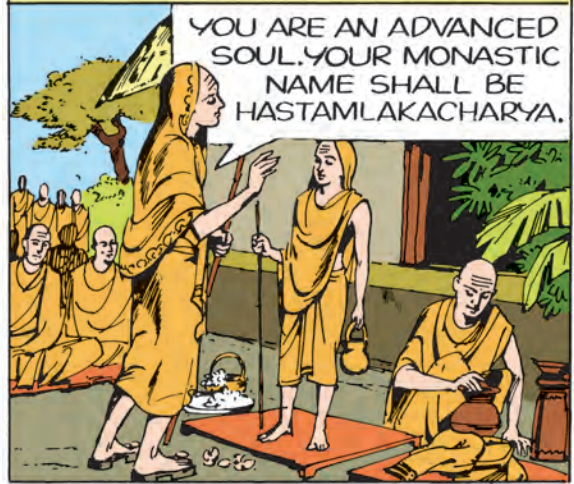
HE IS DUMB AND STUPID. MASTER, PLEASE CURE HIM.



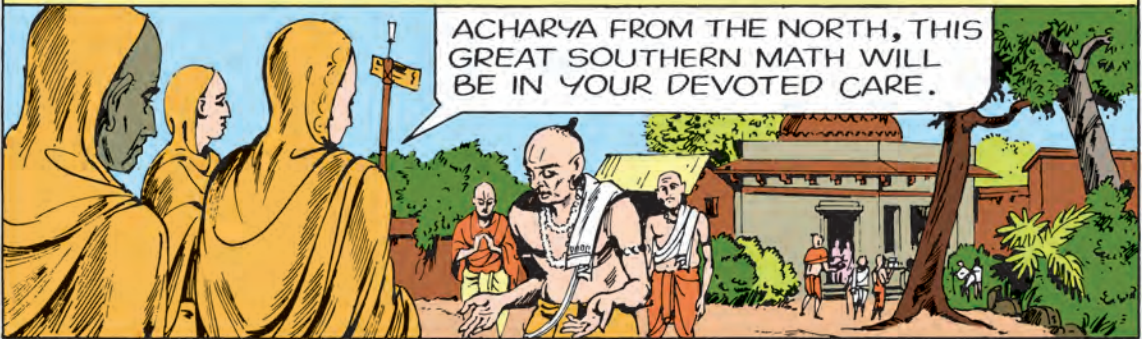
SHANKARA BLESSED THE BOY AND HIS SPEECH WAS RESTORED. THEN TO THE ASTONISHMENT OF ALL –



AND THE LAD WAS ORDAINED IN SHANKARA'S MONASTIC ORDER.



CONTINUING SOUTH, SHANKARA REACHED SRINGERI, WHERE HE FOUNDED THE SRI SHARADA PEETHA AND INSTALLED SURESHWARACHARYA AS ITS HEAD.



SHANKARA STAYED ON AT SRINGERI FOR SOME MONTHS. THEN ONE DAY HE HAD A PREMONITION.



JUST THEN SOME SANYASIS FROM KALADI CAME TO HIM.

YOUR VENERABLE MOTHER IS VERY ILL.

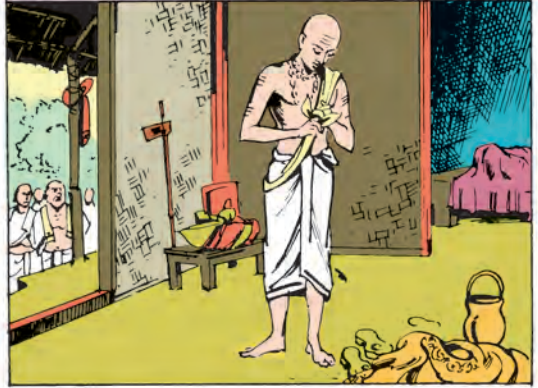
I KNOW. I WILL RUSH TO KALADI.



REACHING HIS MOTHER'S BEDSIDE, SHANKARA COMFORTED HER AND IMPARTED TO HER THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HIGHEST. SHE DIED PEACEFULLY, AN ENLIGHTENED SOUL.



SHANKARA WANTED TO PERFORM HER FUNERAL RITES. SO HE LAID ASIDE HIS OCHRE ROBES, STAFF AND KAMANDALU.



BUT WHEN HE ENTERED THE CHAMBER WHERE THE BODY OF HIS MOTHER LAY—

WHAT! A SANYASI TO PERFORM THE RITES OF A HOUSEHOLDER! NEVER! NEVER!

WE SHALL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE RITES.



THE ORTHODOX NAMBU DIRI COMMUNITY TURNED ITS BACK ON SHANKARA AND THE BODY.



BUT UNDAUNTED, SHANKARA CARRIED THE BODY TO A CORNER OF THE GARDEN AND PLACING IT ON A PYRE OF PLANTAIN STEMS, CREMATED IT. THE ORTHODOX COMMUNITY REPENTED AND ADMIRERD SHANKARA'S FILIAL LOVE.*



*TO THIS DAY THE NAMBU DIRIS, UNLIKE OTHER HINDUS, CREMATE THEIR DEAD IN THEIR BACKYARDS.

AFTER HIS MOTHER'S DEATH, SHANKARA TRAVELLED TWICE MORE THROUGHOUT INDIA. ON THE FIRST OF THESE TRIPS, HE ESTABLISHED THE MATHS AT DWARKA IN THE WEST WITH HASTAMLAKA AS ITS HEAD, AND PURI IN THE EAST WITH PADMAPADA AS THE HEAD. SPIRITUAL CENTRES AND TEMPLES ESTABLISHED BY HIM ALSO FLOURISH AT KANCHI, PASHUPATINATH AND OTHER CITIES.

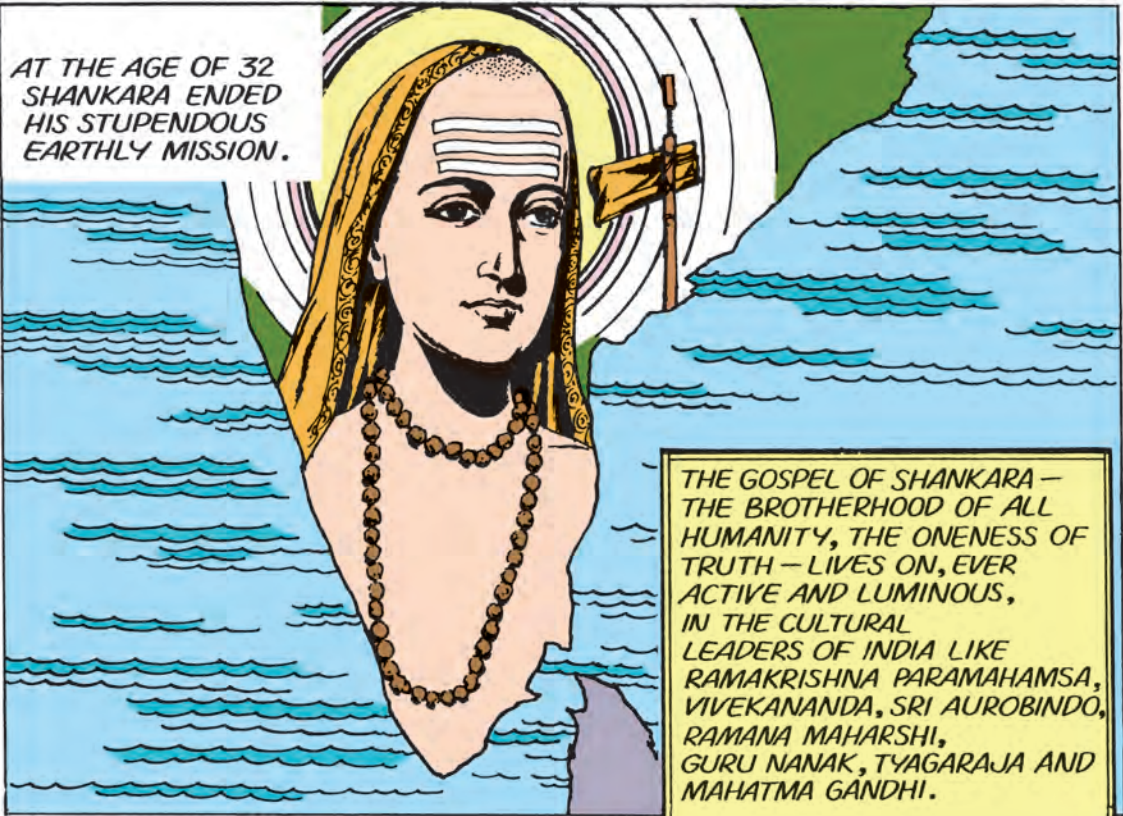


HE VISITED ASSAM, NEPAL, KASHMIR, TIBET AND BACTRIA TOO ON THESE TOURS. THROUGHOUT, HE ENJOYED THE PATRONAGE AND PROTECTION OF KINGS AND SCHOLARS. AT SRINAGAR, HE HONoured AN EMINENT LADY SCHOLAR BY PLACING A *TARANGA ON HER HEAD. TO THIS DAY IN SRINAGAR THE TARANGA SIGNIFIES SCHOLARSHIP.



HIS GOSPEL WAS CARRIED TO SOUTH-EAST ASIA TOO, BY A DISCIPLE, SHIVA SOMA, A NEPHEW OF JAYAVARMAN II, THE KING OF KAMBHOJA (CAMBODIA).

AT THE AGE OF 32
SHANKARA ENDED
HIS STUPENDOUS
EARTHLY MISSION.



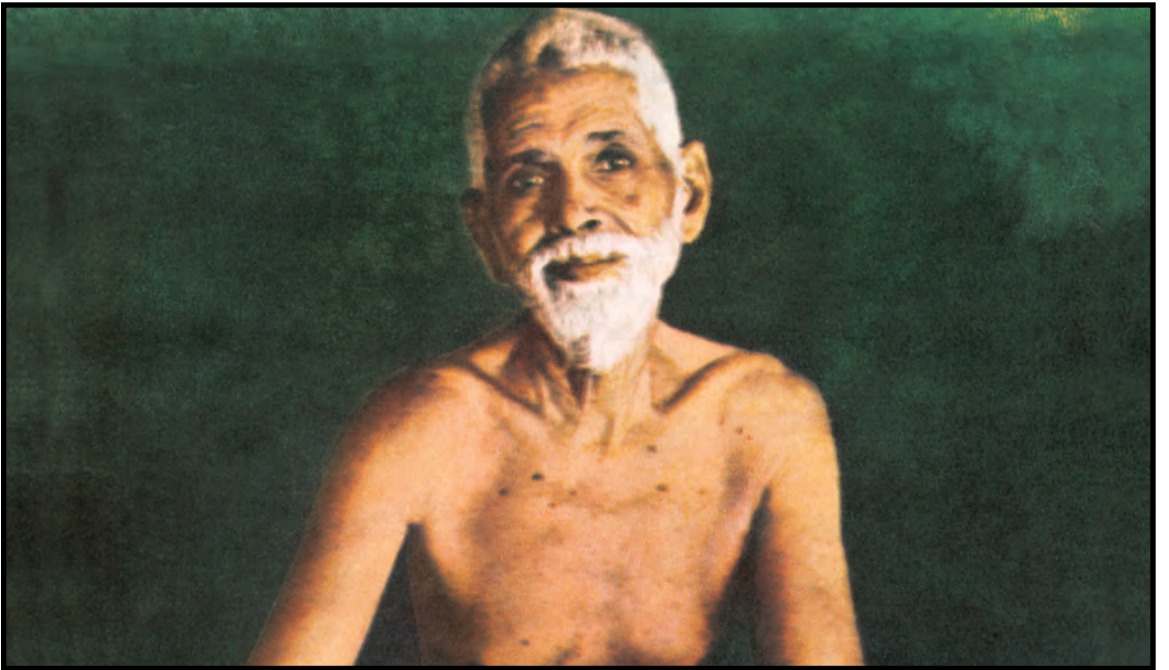
THE GOSPEL OF SHANKARA –
THE BROTHERHOOD OF ALL
HUMANITY, THE ONENESS OF
TRUTH – LIVES ON, EVER
ACTIVE AND LUMINOUS,
IN THE CULTURAL
LEADERS OF INDIA LIKE
RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA,
VIVEKANANDA, SRI AUROBINDO,
RAMANA MAHARSHI,
GURU NANAK, TYAGARAJA AND
MAHATMA GANDHI.

Sayings of Adi Shankara

- Just as a piece of rope is imagined to be a snake (in the darkness) so is Atman (soul) determined to be the body by an ignorant person.
- Neither by Yoga, nor philosophy, nor by work, nor by learning but by the realization of one's identity with Brahman is liberation possible, and by no other means.
- When the mind becomes purified like a mirror, Wisdom is revealed in it. Care should therefore be taken to purify the mind.
- The world is filled with attachments and aversions and is changing like a dream; it appears to be real as long as one is ignorant, but becomes unreal when one is awake.
- Atman is the ruler of the body (matter), and is internal; the body is the ruled, and is external; and yet the people see these two as one! What else can be called ignorance but this?
- There are good souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the the spring, and, who having themselves crossed this difficult ocean of birth and death, help others also to cross the same, without any motive whatsoever.
- A father has got his sons and others to free him from his debts, but he has got none but himself to remove his bondage.
- Be not blindly attached to friend or foe, to son or kinsman, to peace or war. If you aspire for Vishnu's realm, look upon all things as of equal worth or opportunity.

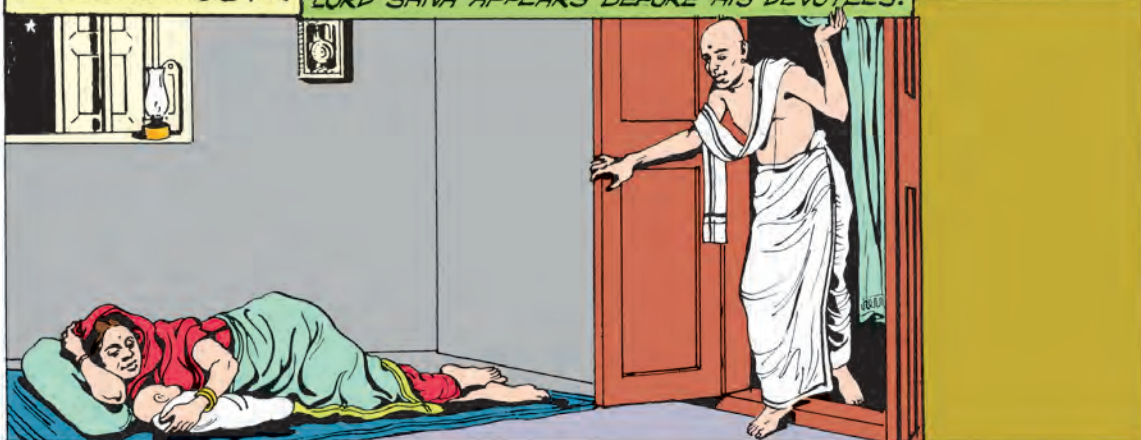
RAMANA MAHARSHI

THE GENTLE SAINT OF TIRUVANNAMALAI

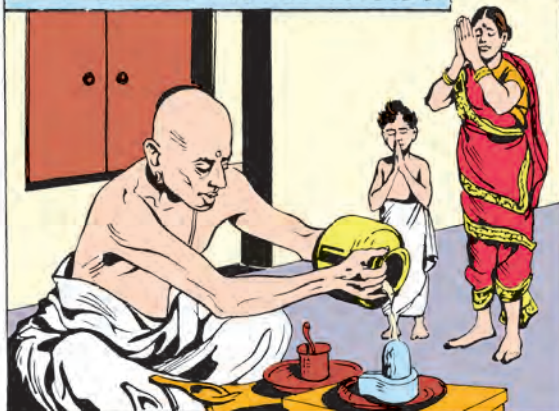


RAMANA MAHARSHI

ON DECEMBER 30, 1879, IN THE VILLAGE OF TIRUCHUZHI, A CHILD WAS BORN TO SUNDARAM IYER AND HIS WIFE, ALAGAMMAL. IT WAS THE DAY OF ARDRA DARSHAN— THE DAY ON WHICH LORD SHIVA APPEARS BEFORE HIS DEVOTEES.



THE CHILD WAS NAMED VENKATARAMAN. HIS PARENTS WERE DEVOUT PEOPLE AND HE GREW UP IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE AND DEVOTION TO GOD.



BUT SOON, TRAGEDY STRUCK THIS HAPPY FAMILY. SUNDARAM IYER DIED. ALAGAMMAL DECIDED TO SEND VENKATARAMAN AND HIS ELDER BROTHER TO MADURAI TO STAY WITH THEIR UNCLE.

NAGASWAMI, TAKE CARE OF VENKATARAMAN. MY SONS, KEEP OUT OF MISCHIEF. BE OF HELP TO YOUR AUNT.

YES, MOTHER, WE WILL.



AT MADURAI, VENKATARAMAN JOINED THE AMERICAN MISSION HIGH SCHOOL.



VENKATARAMAN WAS A STRONG, HIGH-SPIRITED BOY.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING, DEAR?

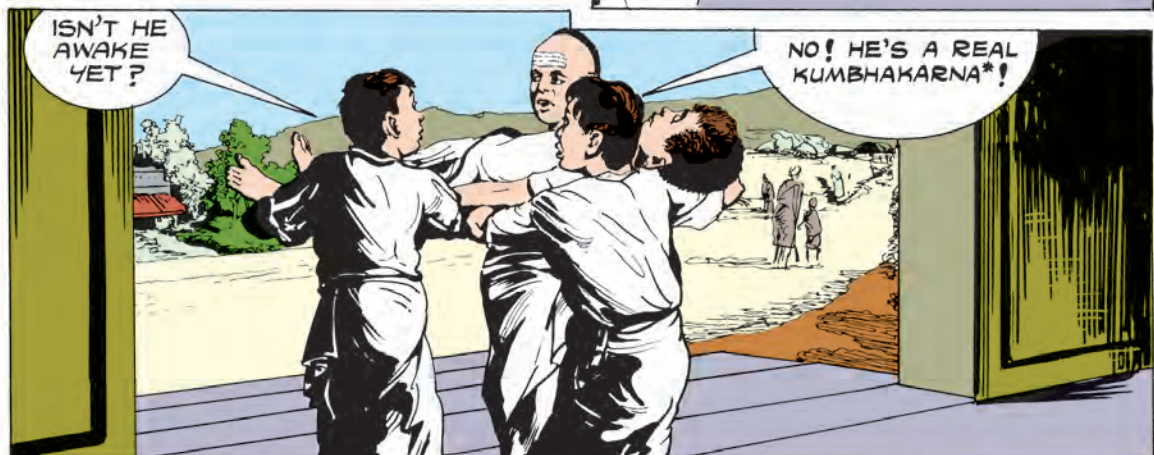
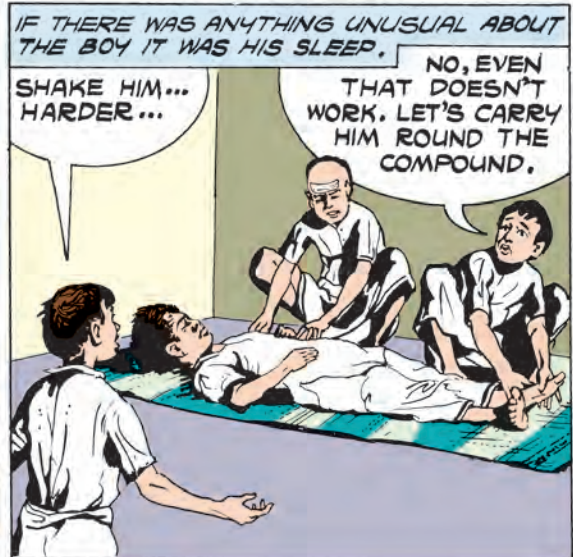
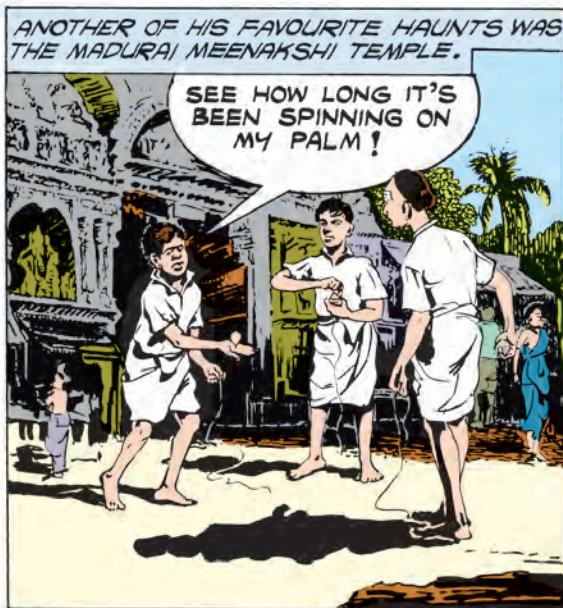
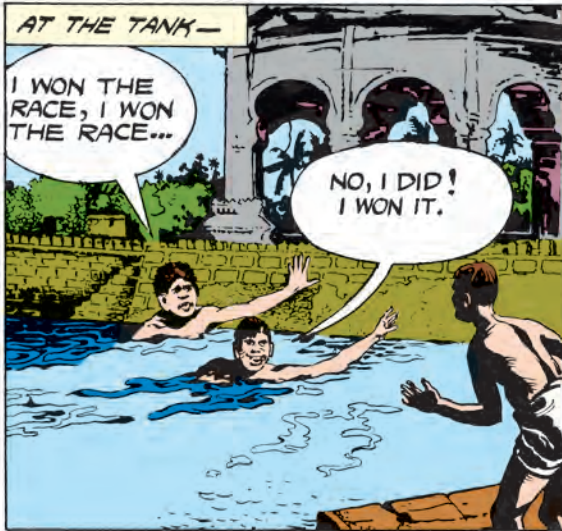
TO SWIM IN THE MARIAMMAN TANK.



BUT WHAT ABOUT YOUR LESSONS?

LATER, AUNT. MY FRIENDS ARE WAITING FOR ME...



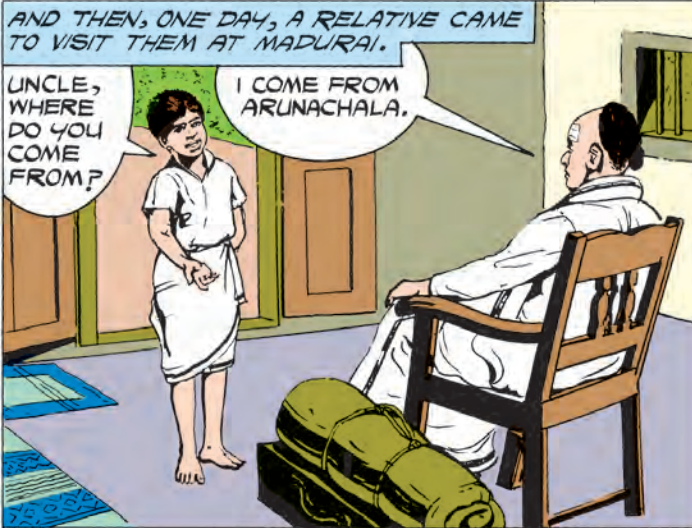


* THE BROTHER OF RAVANA WHO SLEPT FOR MONTHS AT A STRETCH

AND THEN, ONE DAY, A RELATIVE CAME TO VISIT THEM AT MADURAI.

UNCLE,
WHERE
DO YOU
COME
FROM?

I COME FROM
ARUNACHALA.

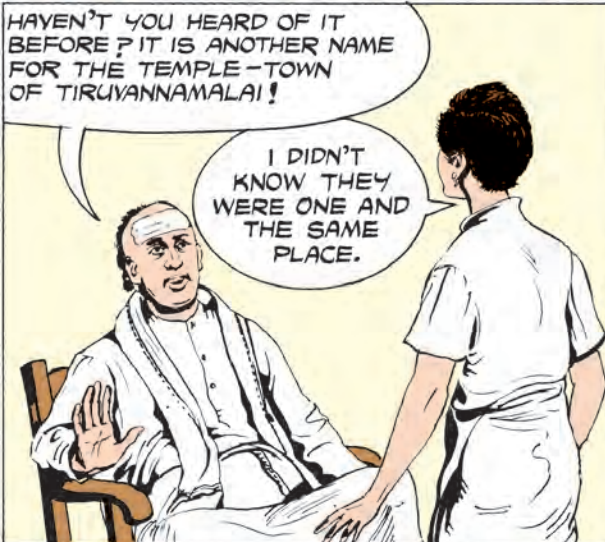


ARUNACHALA!



HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF IT BEFORE? IT IS ANOTHER NAME FOR THE TEMPLE-TOWN OF TIRUVANNAMALAI!

I DIDN'T
KNOW THEY
WERE ONE AND
THE SAME
PLACE.

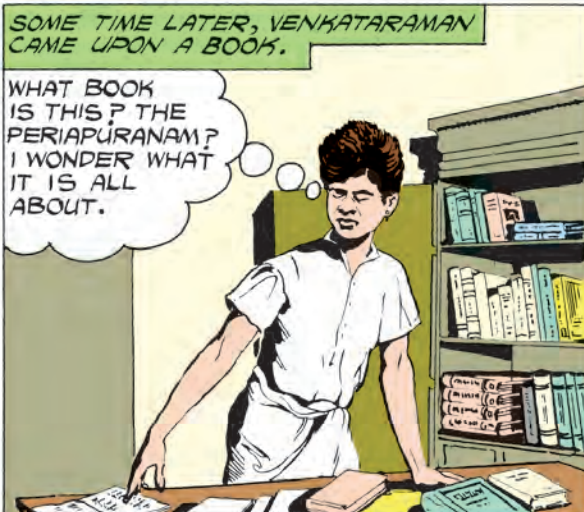


VENKATARAMAN HAD HEARD THIS NAME BEFORE, BUT ONLY NOW DID HE REALISE THAT IT WAS NOT SOME LEGENDARY CITY, BUT AN ACTUAL PLACE ON EARTH! THE NAME TOUCHED A DEEP CHORD IN HIM.



SOME TIME LATER, VENKATARAMAN CAME UPON A BOOK.

WHAT BOOK
IS THIS? THE
PERIAPURANAM?
I WONDER WHAT
IT IS ALL
ABOUT.



THE PERIAPURANAM IS ABOUT THE LIVES OF THE SIXTY-THREE GREAT SHAI'VA SAINTS, THE NAYANMARS. VENKATARAMAN READ THROUGH THE BOOK.

HOW BEAUTIFUL THESE STORIES ARE! THESE SAINTS WERE SO GOOD AND PURE! CAN I BECOME LIKE THEM SOME DAY?

LOOK AT THE BOY! HE HASN'T PUT DOWN THE BOOK FOR HOURS.



THE THOUGHT OF ARUNACHALA AND THE LIVES OF THE SHAIWA SAINTS MADE VENKATARAMAN A DIFFERENT BOY. ONE DAY, IT WAS JULY 16, 1896, HE WAS ALL ALONE AT HOME, WHEN, SUDDENLY—

WHAT IS THIS? WHAT IS HAPPENING TO ME? I CANNOT BREATHE. MY HANDS HAVE BECOME NUMB...



I AM DYING? BUT WHAT... WHAT IS THIS THING—DEATH?



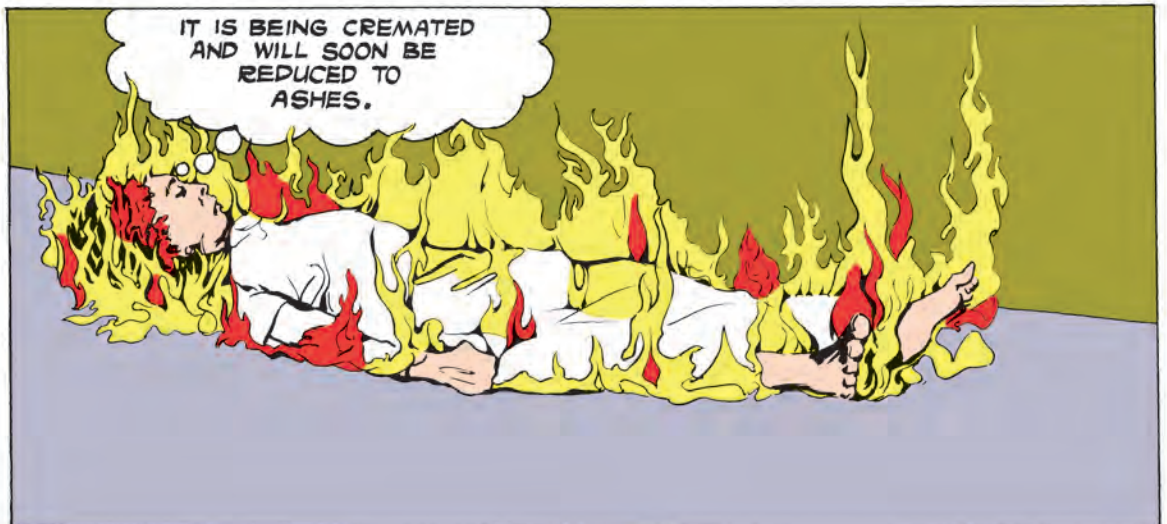
THE ENERGY THAT DRAINED OUT OF HIS LIMBS, CONVERGED ON THIS QUESTION WITH SUCH INTENSITY...

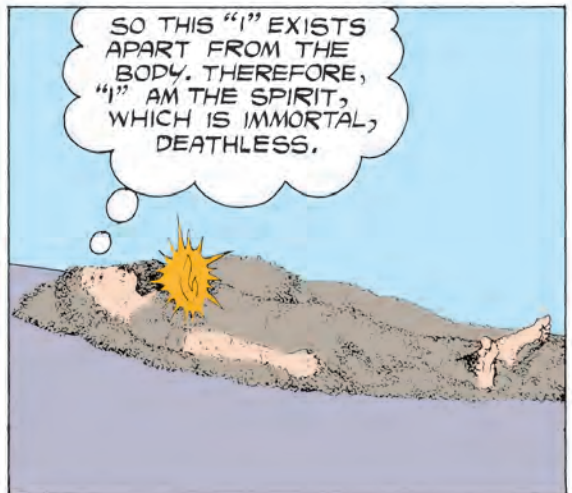
...THAT IN LIFE ITSELF, DEATH CAME TO VENKATARAMAN AS A DIRECT EXPERIENCE.

THIS BODY IS DEAD.



IT IS BEING CREMATED AND WILL SOON BE REDUCED TO ASHES.

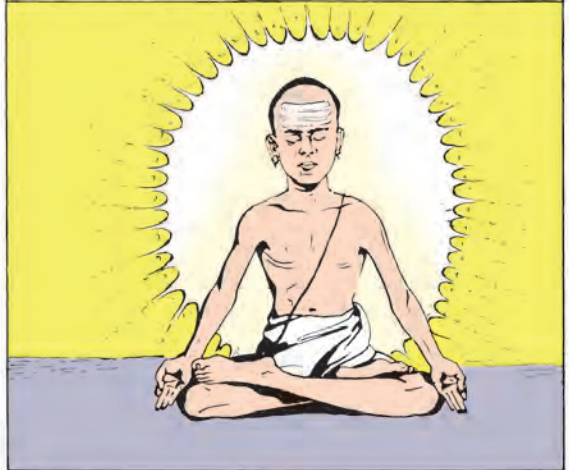




THEN THE BLOOD FLOWED THROUGH HIS LIMBS AGAIN AND HE BEGAN TO BREATHE. THE DEATH EXPERIENCE WAS OVER.



BUT DURING THAT INTENSE HALF-HOUR, THE PLAYFUL YOUNG SCHOOLBOY HAD ATTAINED REALISATION OF THE TRUE "I".



NOTHING COULD BE THE SAME AGAIN FOR VENKATARAMAN. EVERYONE NOTICED THE DIFFERENCE IN HIM.

I HAVE MADE YOUR FAVOURITE DISH AND YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED IT. DON'T YOU WANT IT?



AND VENKATRAMAN QUIETLY ATE THE FOOD ON HIS LEAF.

WON'T YOU HAVE SOME MORE?

NO...



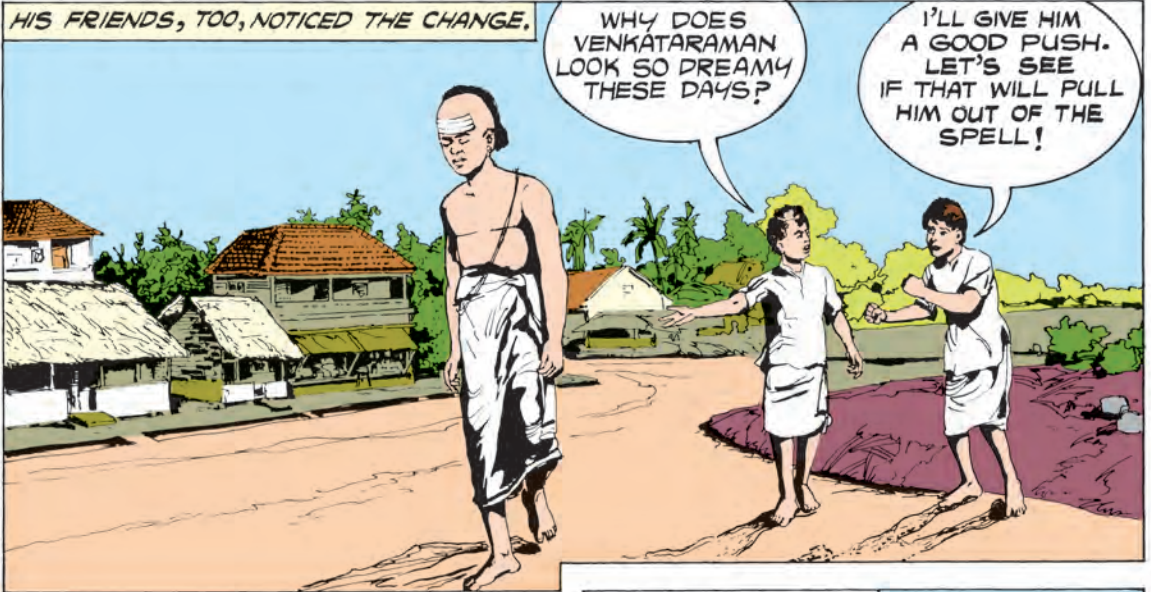
I AM WORRIED. VENKATARAMAN HAS CHANGED. HE RARELY GOES OUT TO PLAY. HE SITS IN A CORNER, LOST IN THOUGHT.



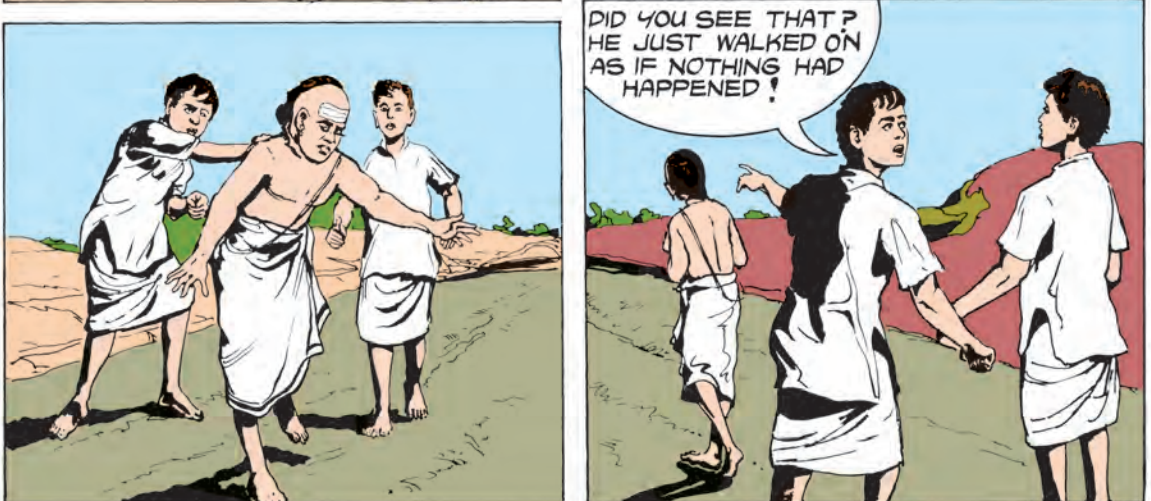
HIS FRIENDS, TOO, NOTICED THE CHANGE.

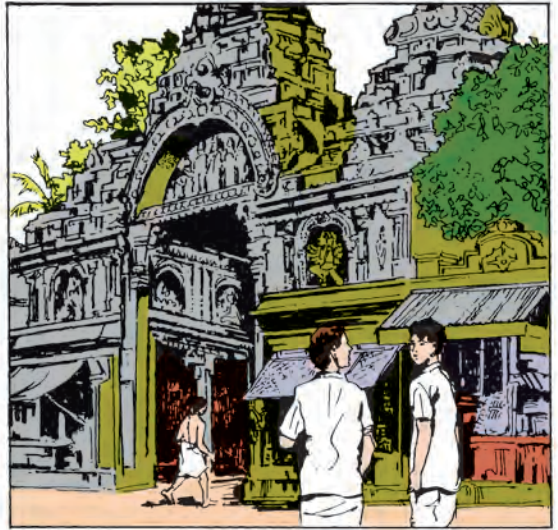
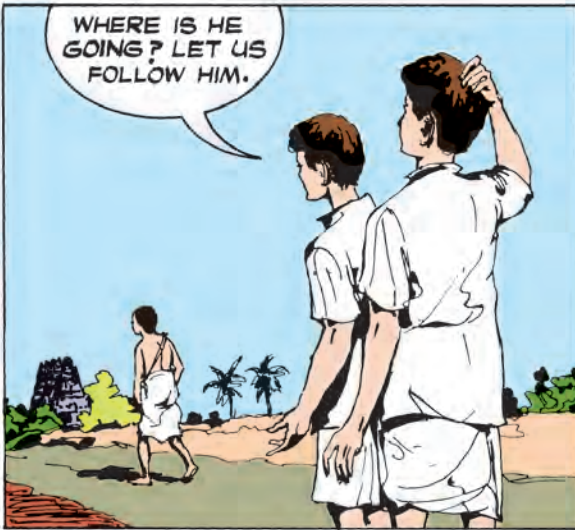
WHY DOES VENKATARAMAN LOOK SO DREAMY THESE DAYS?

I'LL GIVE HIM A GOOD PUSH. LET'S SEE IF THAT WILL PULL HIM OUT OF THE SPELL!

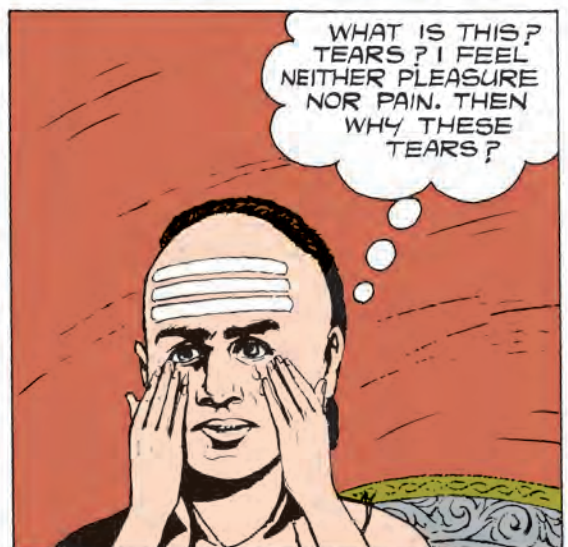
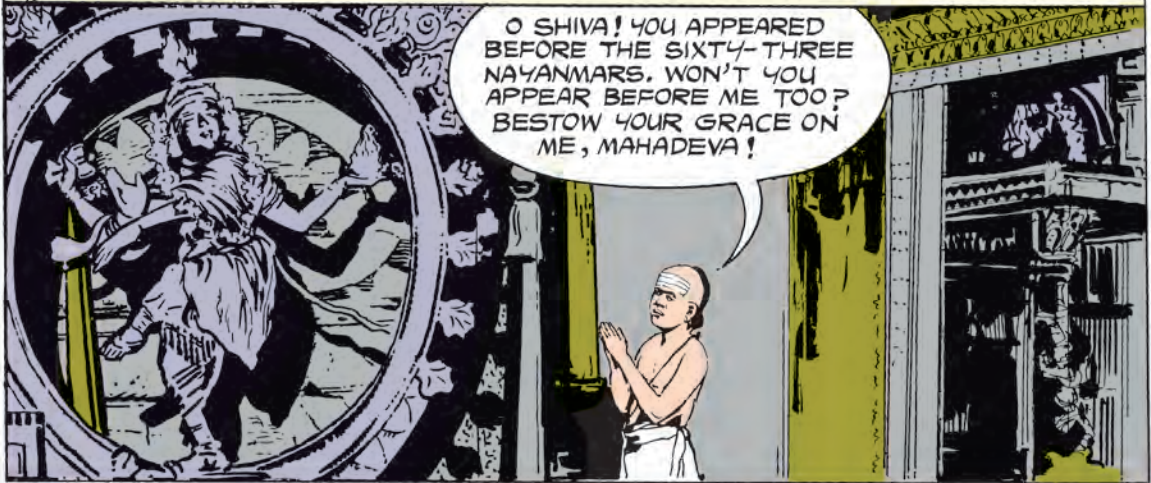


DID YOU SEE THAT? HE JUST WALKED ON AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED!





THE SAME BOY WHO WENT TO THE TEMPLE FOR PLAY, NOW WENT THERE TO PRAY.



SO ENGROSSED WAS HE IN HIS INNER LIFE THAT HE OFTEN CAST AWAY HIS BOOKS...



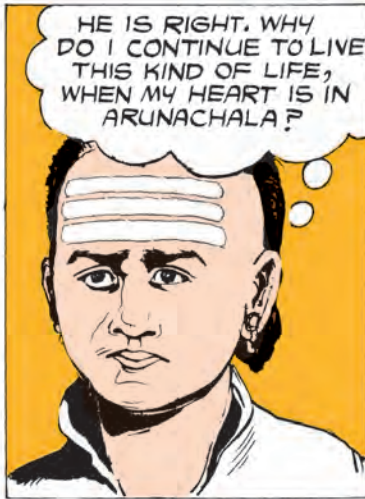
...AND BEGAN INSTEAD TO MEDITATE. THAT WAS WHEN NAGASWAMI, HIS ELDER BROTHER, LOST HIS PATIENCE.



IF YOU WANT TO BEHAVE LIKE A SAGE, WHY DON'T YOU BECOME ONE?

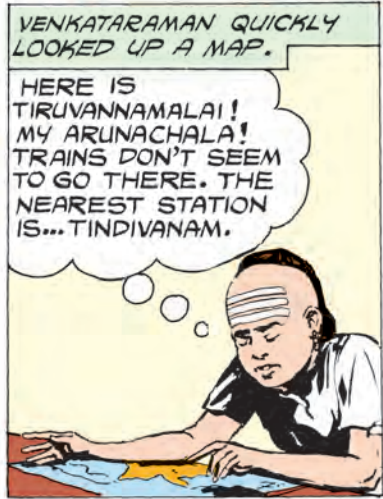


HE IS RIGHT. WHY DO I CONTINUE TO LIVE THIS KIND OF LIFE, WHEN MY HEART IS IN ARUNACHALA?



VENKATARAMAN QUICKLY LOOKED UP A MAP.

HERE IS TIRUVANNAMALAI! MY ARUNACHALA! TRAINS DON'T SEEM TO GO THERE. THE NEAREST STATION IS...TINDIVANAM.



HE TOOK THREE RUPEES FROM THE FIVE RUPEES WHICH HE HAD BEEN GIVEN TO PAY HIS BROTHER'S COLLEGE FEES AND THEN WROTE OUT A NOTE.

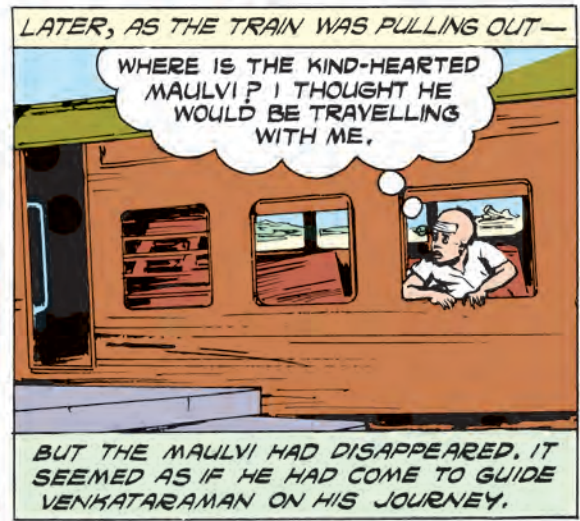
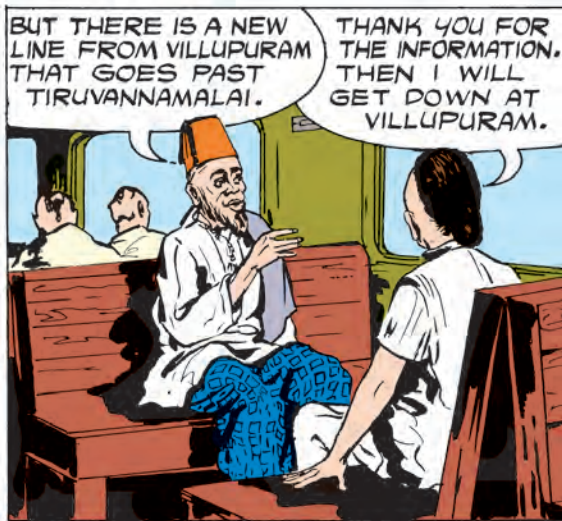
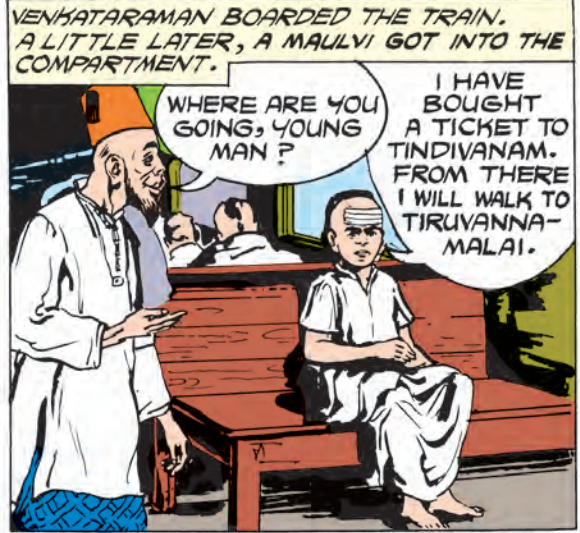


I have set out in search of my Father and his command. Let no one grieve over this act, and let no money be spent in search of this. Your college fees have not been paid. Rs. 2 are kept with this note.

THE LETTER BEGAN WITH AN 'I', BUT SOON PASSED INTO 'THIS', AND THERE WAS NO SIGNATURE.



VENKATARAMAN LEFT MADURAI FOR ARUNACHALAM ON AUGUST 29, 1896.



* AN ANNA IS EQUAL TO SIX PAISE.

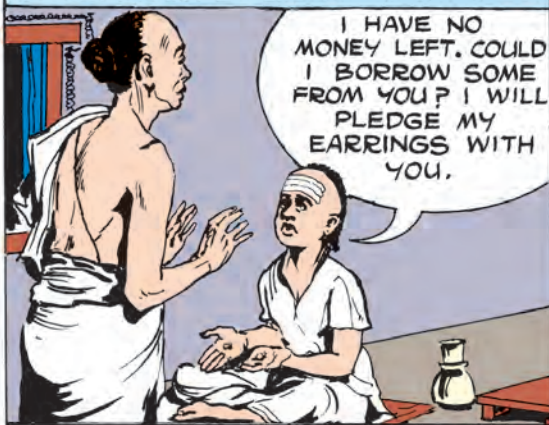
BY THE TIME HE REACHED THE VILLAGE OF KILUR, HE WAS EXHAUSTED.



WEAK WITH HUNGER, HE FAINTED AT THE DOOR OF A HOUSE.



A KIND-HEARTED MAN SAW VENKATARAMAN AND GAVE HIM A GOOD MEAL. WHEN VENKATARAMAN HAD EATEN AND FELT REFRESHED, HE TOLD HIS STORY.



HERE ARE FOUR RUPEES AND THE RECEIPT FOR YOUR EARRINGS.



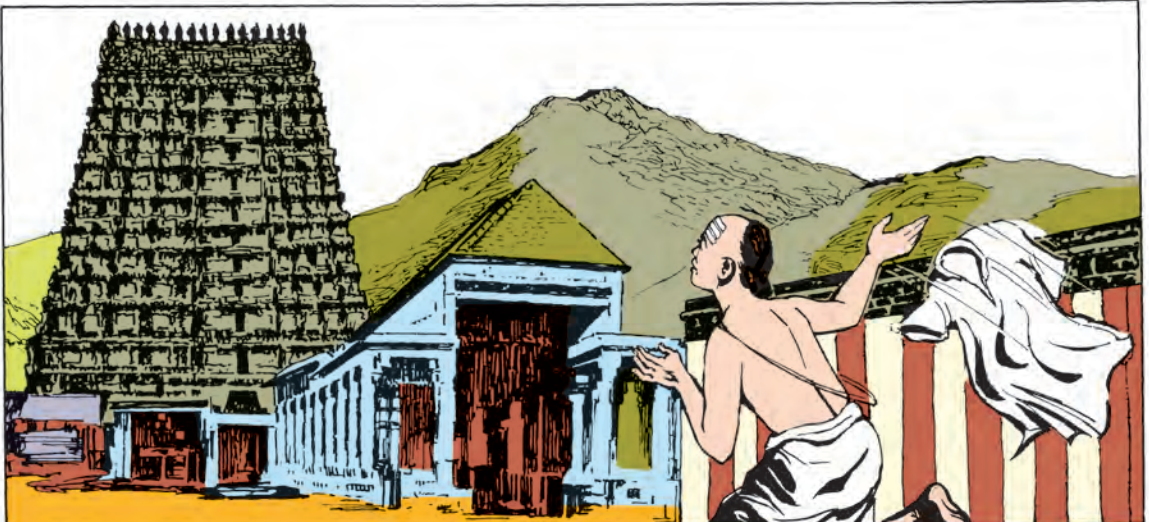
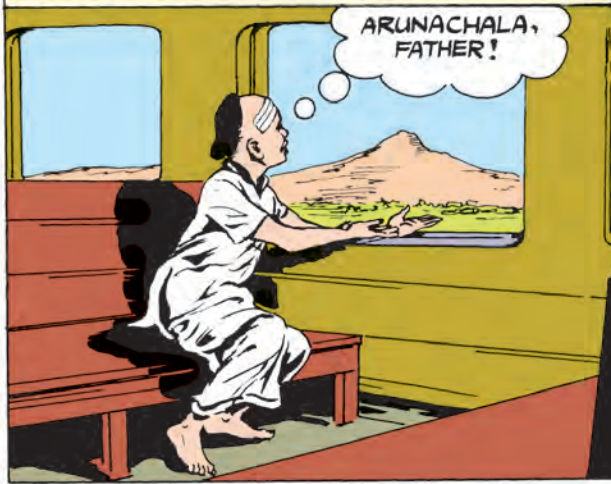
EVEN BEFORE HE REACHED KILUR STATION, VENKATARAMAN TORE UP THE RECEIPT.



HE CAUGHT THE TRAIN FOR TIRUVANNAMALAI.

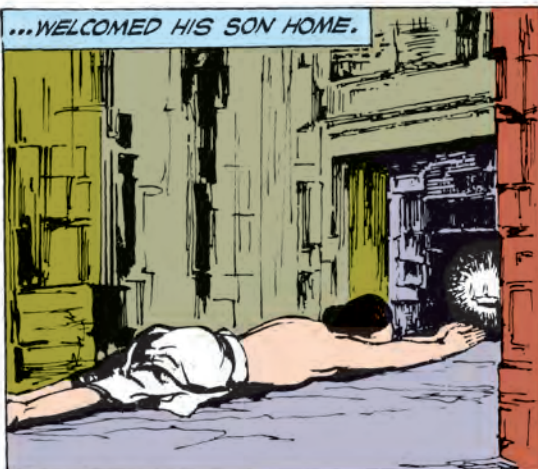


THE NEXT DAY, SEPTEMBER 1, THE GREAT HILL OF ARUNACHALA APPEARED IN THE DISTANCE.

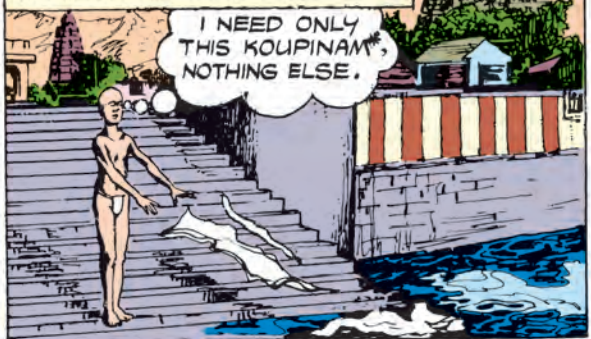


THERE WAS NOT A SOUL IN THE TEMPLE. THE MIDDAY WORSHIP WAS OVER AND THE DOORS SHOULD HAVE BEEN CLOSED, BUT THEY WERE WIDE OPEN. AND THUS THE LORD...

...WELCOMED HIS SON HOME.

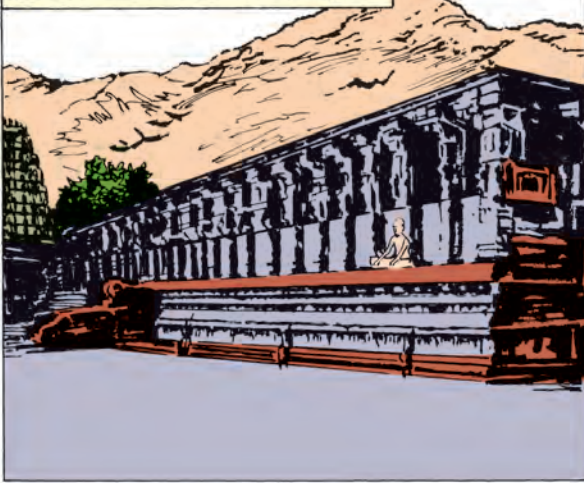


MUCH LATER, VENKATARAMAN CAME OUT OF THE TEMPLE. AT THE AYYANKULAM TANK, HE HAD HIS HEAD SHAVED AND CAST AWAY HIS BELONGINGS.



* LOIN - CLOTH

IN THE HALL OF A THOUSAND PILLARS,
HE SAT DOWN TO MEDITATE.



BUT MISCHIEVOUS BOYS BEGAN TO TROUBLE
HIM BY THROWING STONES AT HIM.



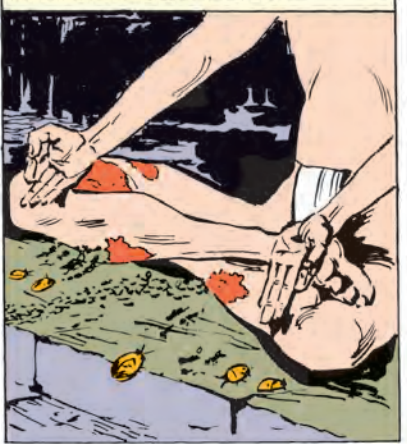
SO, VENKATARAMAN CHOSE
AN ISOLATED PLACE WHERE HE
COULD BE ALONE — THE PATALA
LINGAM — A DARK,
UNDERGROUND CELLAR.



DAYS PASSED. THE
YOUNG MAN, LOST IN
MEDITATION, WAS
CONSCIOUS OF NOTHING...



...NOT EVEN OF THE VERMIN
THAT NIBBLED AWAY AT HIS
MOTIONLESS LEGS...



...TILL, ONE DAY, A HOLY MAN NAMED SESHADRI SWAMI AND SOME PRIESTS WHO HAPPENED
TO COME THERE FOUND HIM.

OH, GOD ! LOOK AT HIS
THIGHS THEY HAVE
BEEN EATEN AWAY.
IS HE ALIVE ?

HE IS ALIVE. LET'S CARRY
HIM OUT. THESE WOUNDS
MUST BE ATTENDED
TO AT ONCE !

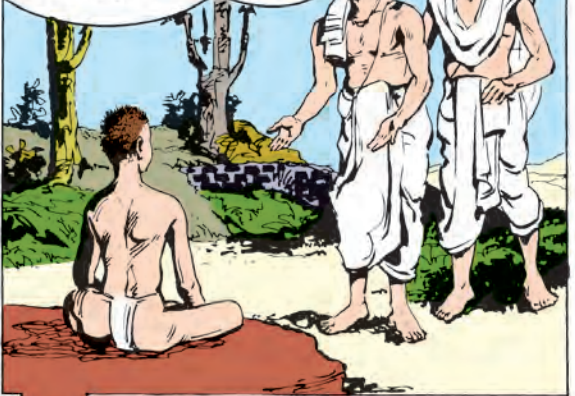


THEY NURSED HIM BACK TO HEALTH. WHEN HE WAS QUITE WELL AGAIN THE TEMPLE PRIESTS BEGAN TO QUESTION HIM.

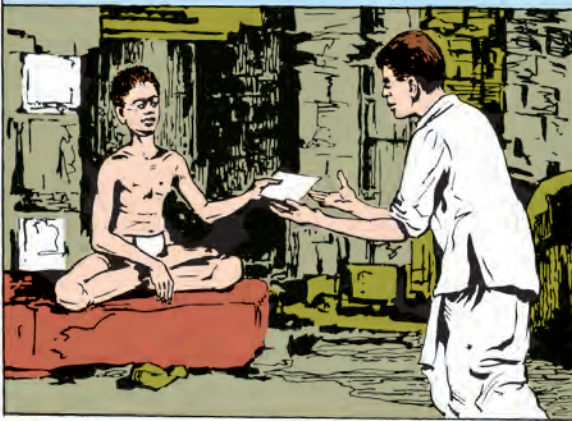
MY BOY, YOU ARE TOO YOUNG TO GO THROUGH SO MUCH. TELL US YOUR NAME, WE WILL SEND YOU HOME.



TELL US WHERE YOU COME FROM, YOUNG SWAMI, WON'T YOU SPEAK?

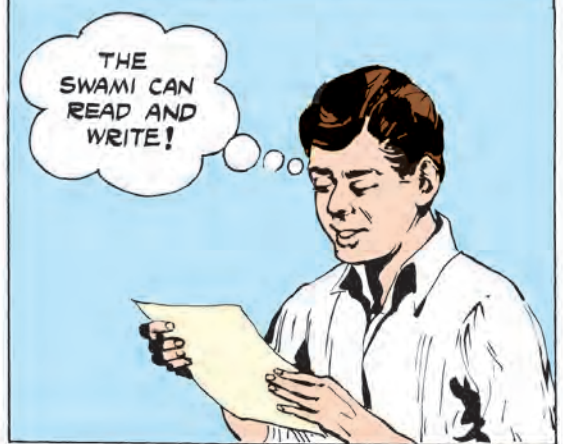


ONE VISITOR PERSISTED IN QUESTIONING THE SWAMI ABOUT HIS IDENTITY. AT LAST, VENKATARAMAN GAVE HIM THE INFORMATION HE WANTED ON A PIECE OF PAPER.



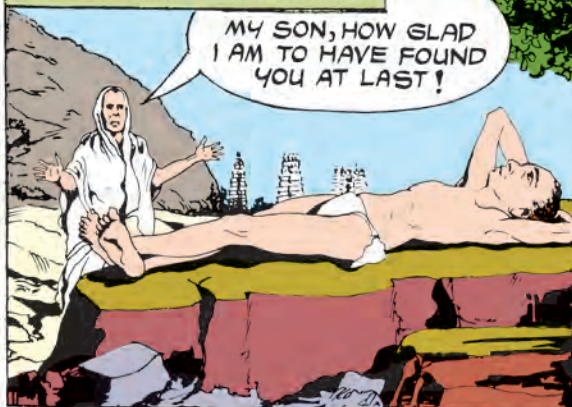
BUT THE YOUNG SWAMI MAINTAINED AN ABSOLUTE SILENCE.

THE SWAMI CAN READ AND WRITE!

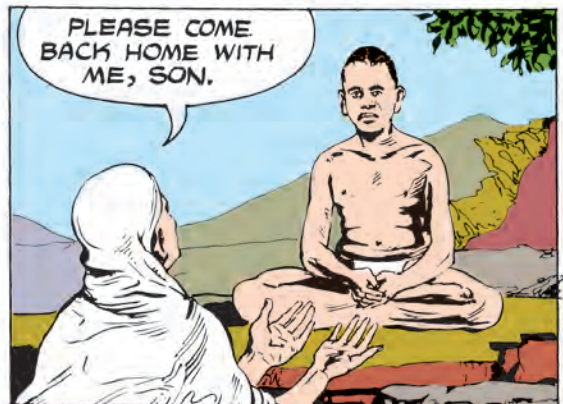


THE NEWS THAT THE SWAMI'S NAME WAS VENKATARAMAN AND THAT HE CAME FROM TIRUCHUZH I SPREAD, TILL IT REACHED THE EARS OF HIS MOTHER. ALAGAMMAL CAME TO TIRUVANNAMALAI.

MY SON, HOW GLAD I AM TO HAVE FOUND YOU AT LAST!

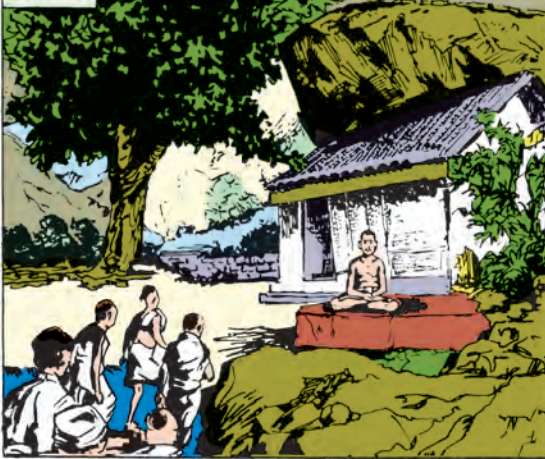


PLEASE COME BACK HOME WITH ME, SON.



BUT A SWAMI IS A MAN OF GOD. HE HAS NEITHER FATHER NOR MOTHER; NEITHER HAS HE A HOME. RAMANA ONLY LOOKED AT HER IN SILENCE. SO ALAGAMMAL HAD TO RETURN HOME DISAPPOINTED.

THOUGH THE SWAMI SPOKE NOT A WORD, PEOPLE BEGAN TO FLOCK TO HIM. HE MOVED FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER ON THE HILL AND REACHED VIRUPAKSHA CAVE.



THOUGH HE PREFERRED TO REMAIN IN SILENCE HE ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS AND CLEARED THE DOUBTS OF HIS DEVOTEES.



AT THIS TIME, A GREAT SCHOLAR, GANAPATI MUNI, CAME TO SEE THE SWAMI.

I HAVE READ ALL THAT NEEDS TO BE READ. I HAVE STUDIED THE WHOLE OF THE VEDANTA AND PRACTISED SEVERE AUSTERITIES. YET I AM DISSATISFIED. I SEEK REFUGE AT YOUR FEET.

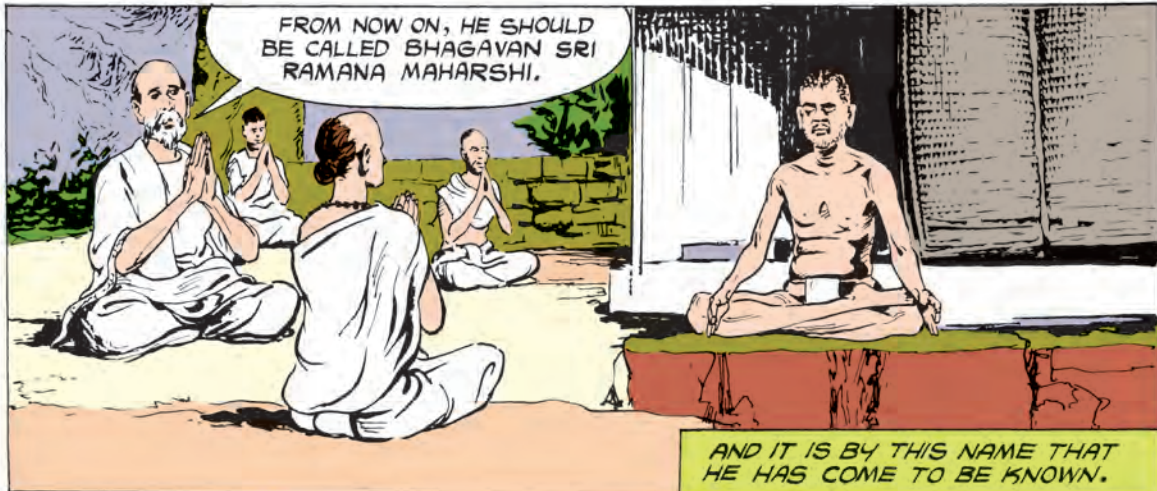


THE YOUNG SWAMI SPOKE A FEW WORDS TO THE SCHOLAR AND GANAPATI MUNI FOUND THE PEACE HE HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR.

HE IS A GREAT MAN. ONE WHO HAS ATTAINED TRUE KNOWLEDGE.



FROM NOW ON, HE SHOULD BE CALLED BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI.



AND IT IS BY THIS NAME THAT HE HAS COME TO BE KNOWN.

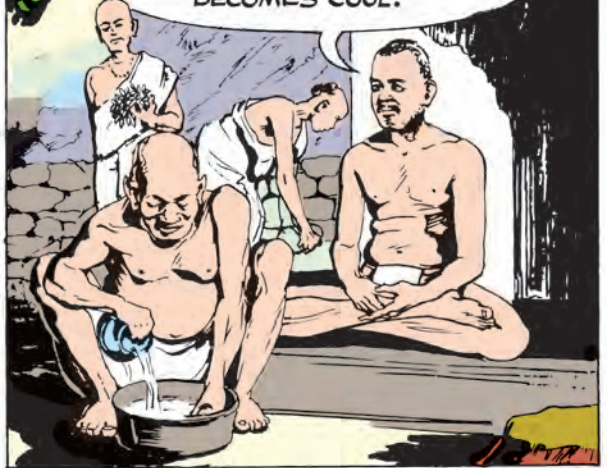
A SMALL GROUP OF DEVOTEES, HEADED BY PALANISWAMI, MADE THE LITTLE CAVE THEIR HOME.

BHAGAVAN, HERE IS THE RICE WE GOT AS ALMS IN THE TOWN.

IT'S NOT ENOUGH FOR US ALL. ADD A LOT OF WATER AND MAKE A THIN GRUEL.



ADD SOME GINGER AND LEMON LEAVES. WE'LL DRINK IT IN THE EVENING WHEN IT BECOMES COOL.

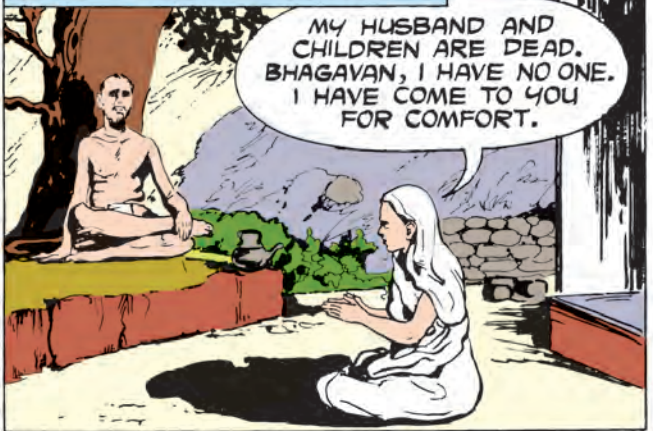


AND IN THE EVENING, THE COOL GRUEL WOULD TASTE DELICIOUS, AND ALL WERE SATISFIED WITH THE SIMPLE MEAL.



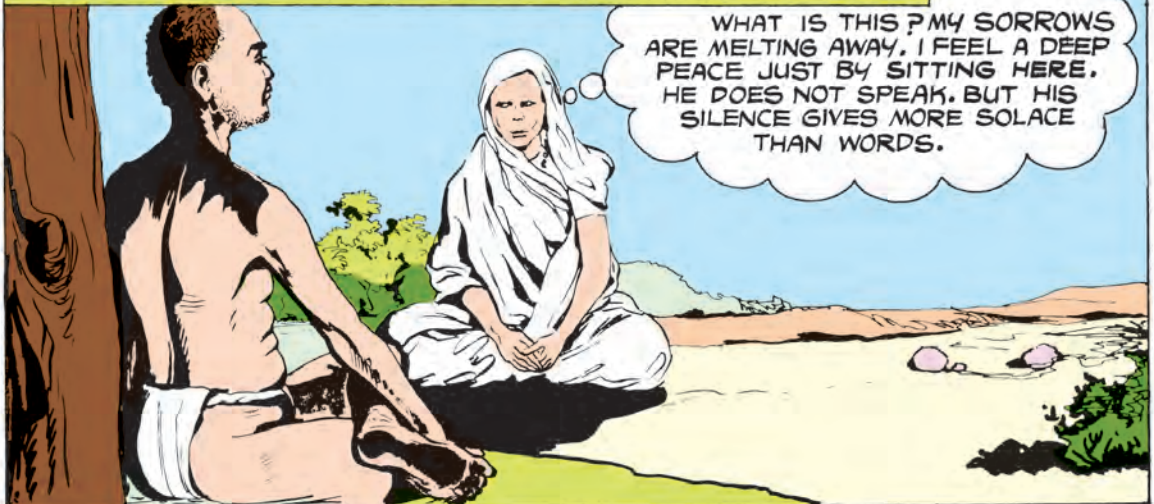
ONE OF THE MAHARSHI'S EARLY DEVOTEES WAS ECHAMMAL.

MY HUSBAND AND CHILDREN ARE DEAD. BHAGAVAN, I HAVE NO ONE. I HAVE COME TO YOU FOR COMFORT.



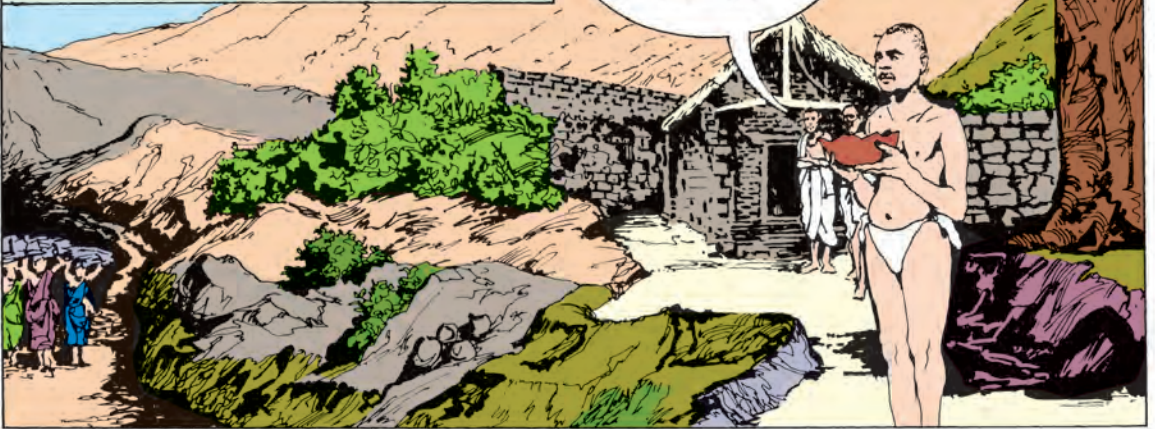
THE MAHARSHI DID NOT SPEAK. ECHAMMAL WAITED. THEN SUDDENLY—

WHAT IS THIS? MY SORROWS ARE MELTING AWAY. I FEEL A DEEP PEACE JUST BY SITTING HERE. HE DOES NOT SPEAK. BUT HIS SILENCE GIVES MORE SOLACE THAN WORDS.



THE MAHARSHI'S HEART EMBRACED ONE AND ALL, EVEN THE UNTOUCHABLES. HE WAITED EACH EVENING FOR THEM.

HERE COME THE UNTOUCHABLE WOMEN.



OH, BHAGAVAN, WE WORKED ALL DAY. THE SUN HAS BURNT US TO THE BONE. PLEASE THROW WATER ON OUR BACKS.



AH! HOW WONDERFUL THAT FEELS!



HE EVEN SHARED HIS GRUEL WITH THEM.

SEE THERE ARE TEARS IN BHAGAVAN'S EYES.

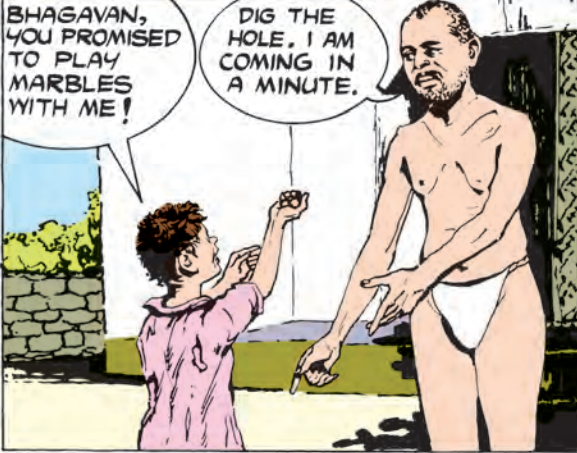


THIS IS LIKE NECTAR, BHAGAVAN.

THE MAHARSHI'S MOST EAGER VISITORS WERE LITTLE CHILDREN.

BHAGAVAN, YOU PROMISED TO PLAY MARBLES WITH ME!

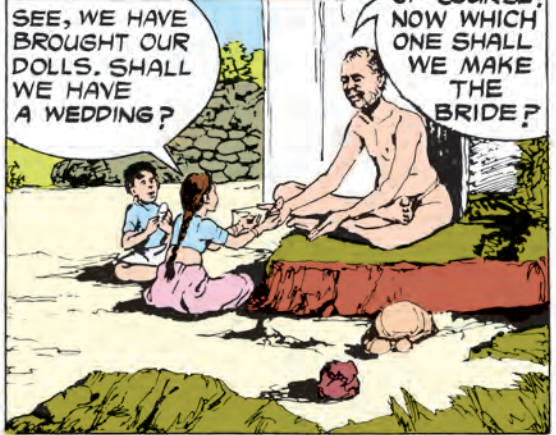
DIG THE HOLE. I AM COMING IN A MINUTE.



THE LITTLE ONES CLIMBED UP THE STEEP HILL TO VIRUPAKSHA CAVE, JUST TO BE WITH HIM.

SEE, WE HAVE BROUGHT OUR DOLLS. SHALL WE HAVE A WEDDING?

OF COURSE! NOW WHICH ONE SHALL WE MAKE THE BRIDE?



DURING DEEPAVALI, THEY BROUGHT THE MAHARSHI A FEW OF THEIR CRACKERS AS HIS "SHARE", AND EVERYBODY LIT THEM TOGETHER.

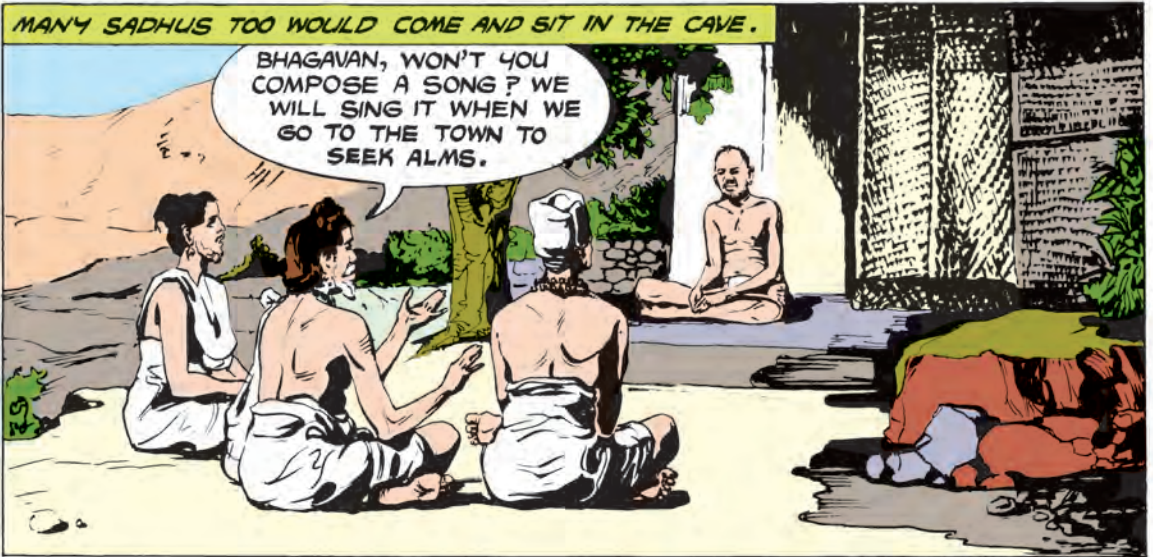


AND IN THE MAHARSHI'S QUIET MOMENTS, WHEN HE REMAINED SILENT THEY TOO SAT QUIETLY AT HIS FEET.



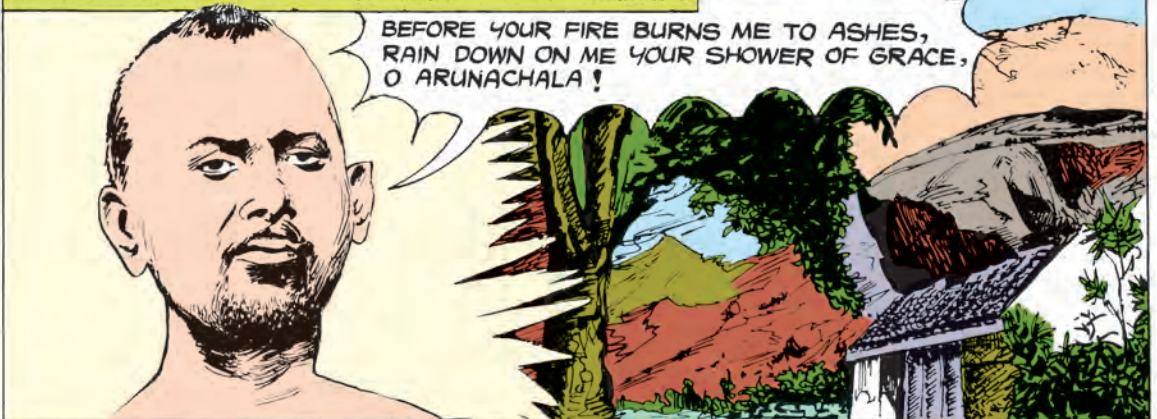
MANY SADHUS TOO WOULD COME AND SIT IN THE CAVE.

BHAGAVAN, WON'T YOU COMPOSE A SONG? WE WILL SING IT WHEN WE GO TO THE TOWN TO SEEK ALMS.



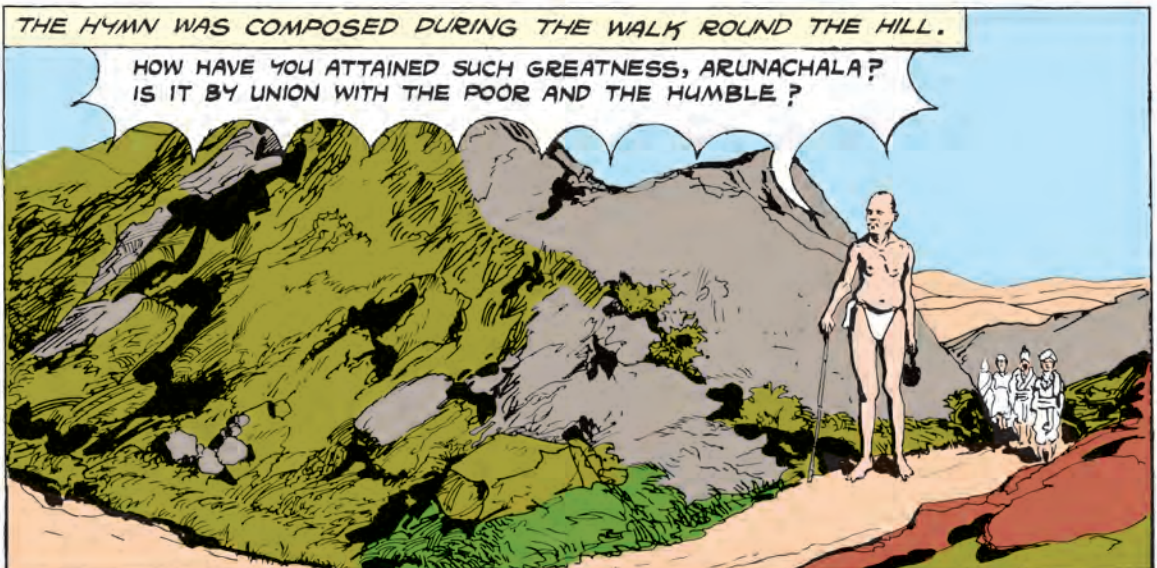
AT THEIR REQUEST, THE MAHARSHI COMPOSED HIS BEAUTIFUL HYMN TO ARUNACHALA— THE AKSHARA-MANA-MALAI*.

BEFORE YOUR FIRE BURNS ME TO ASHES, RAIN DOWN ON ME YOUR SHOWER OF GRACE, O ARUNACHALA!

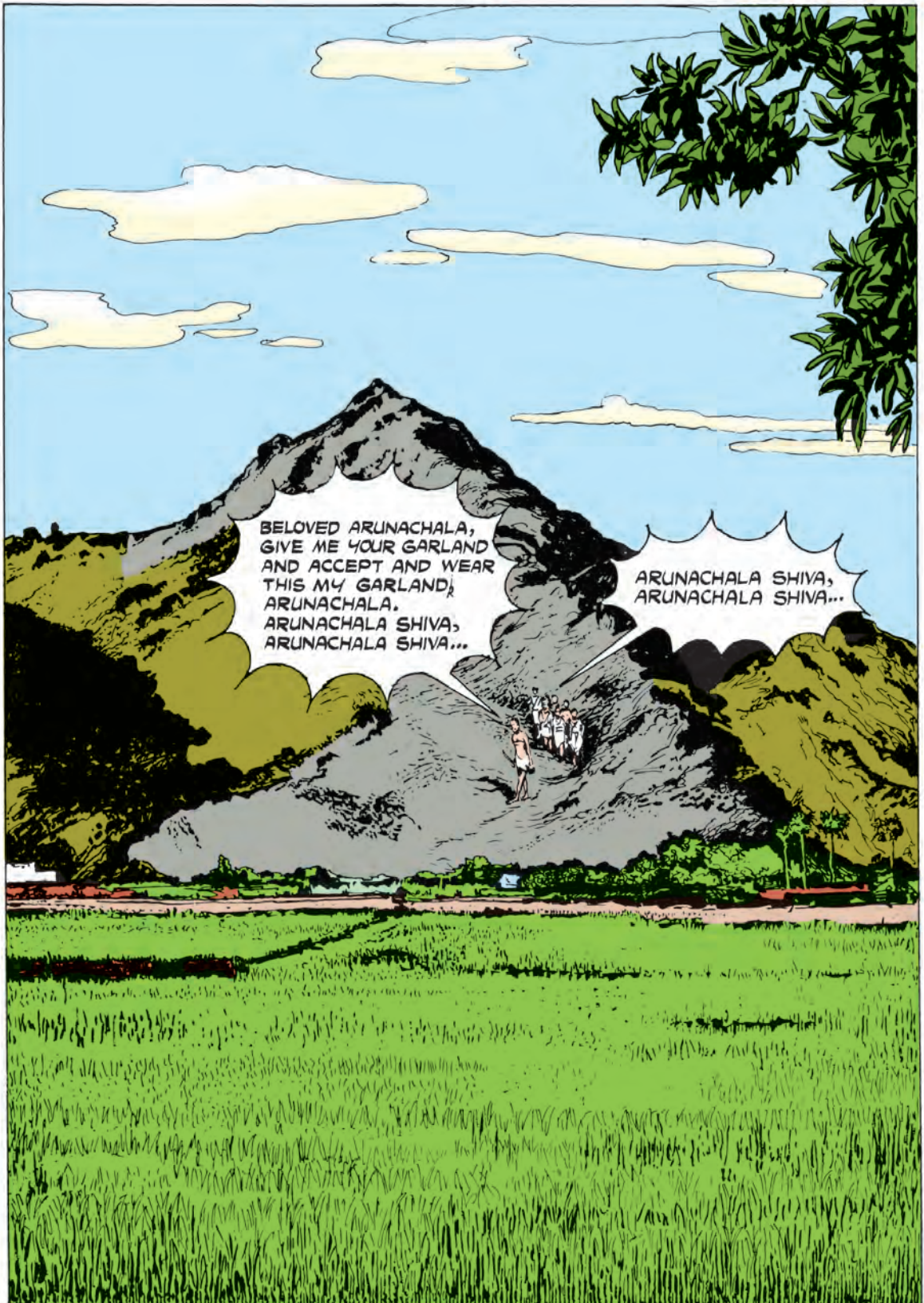


THE HYMN WAS COMPOSED DURING THE WALK ROUND THE HILL.

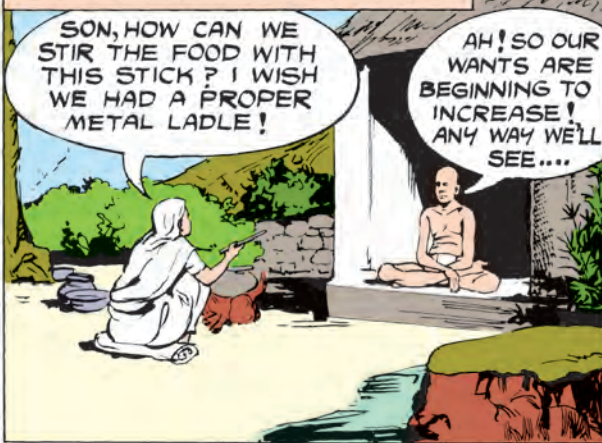
HOW HAVE YOU ATTAINED SUCH GREATNESS, ARUNACHALA? IS IT BY UNION WITH THE POOR AND THE HUMBLE?



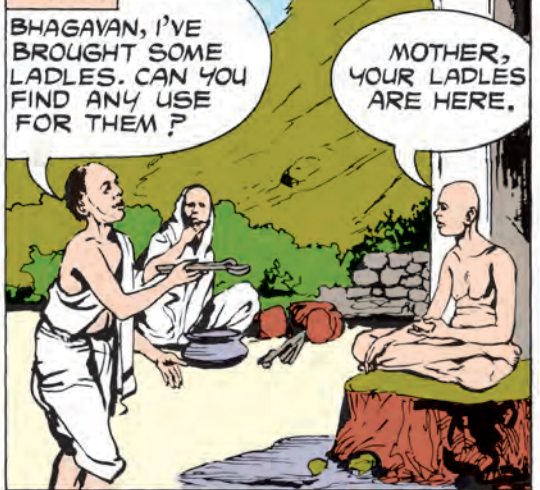
*THE MARITAL GARLAND OF WORDS OR LETTERS



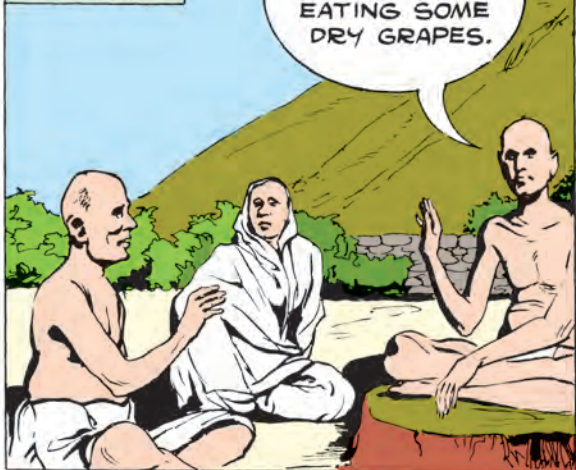
A FEW YEARS LATER, ALAGAMMAL CAME TO LIVE WITH HER SON. WITH HER COMING, THE CAVE BECAME MORE OF A HOME, FOR SHE BEGAN TO COOK FOR EVERYONE.



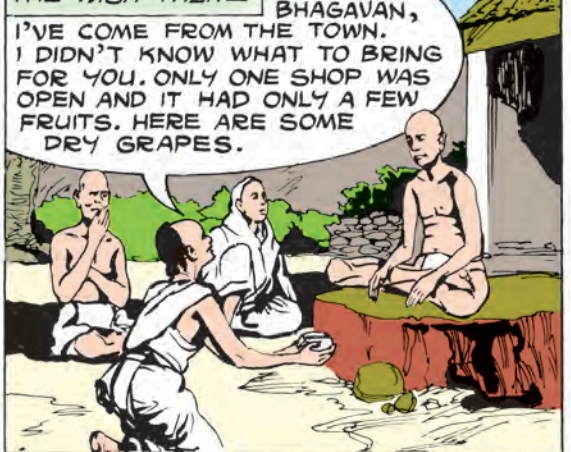
A FEW DAYS LATER, A DEVOTEE CAME THERE.



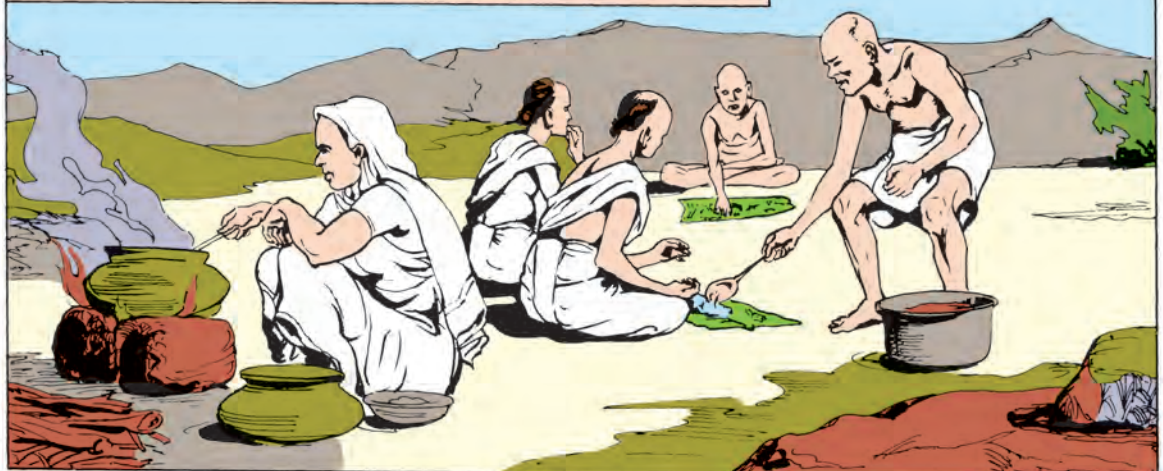
ONE DAY—



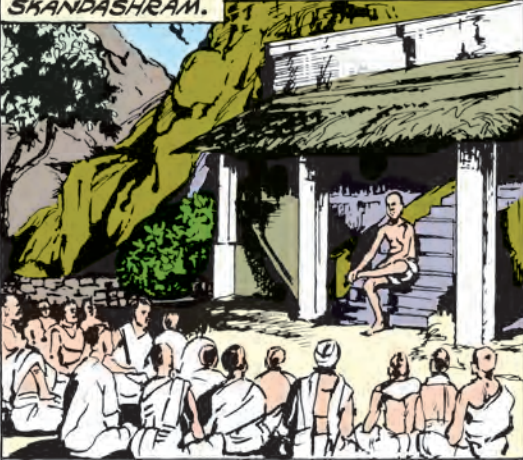
HARDLY HAD THE MAHARSHI EXPRESSED THE WISH THEN—



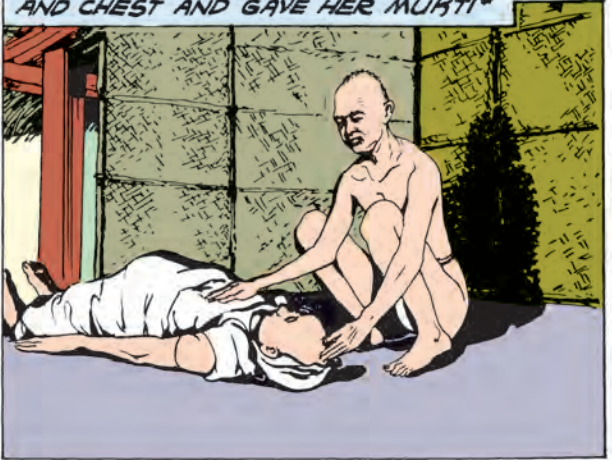
LADLES, FRUITS, VESSELS—ALL BEGAN TO FLOW IN THUS LAYING DOWN THE BEGINNINGS OF AN ASHRAM.



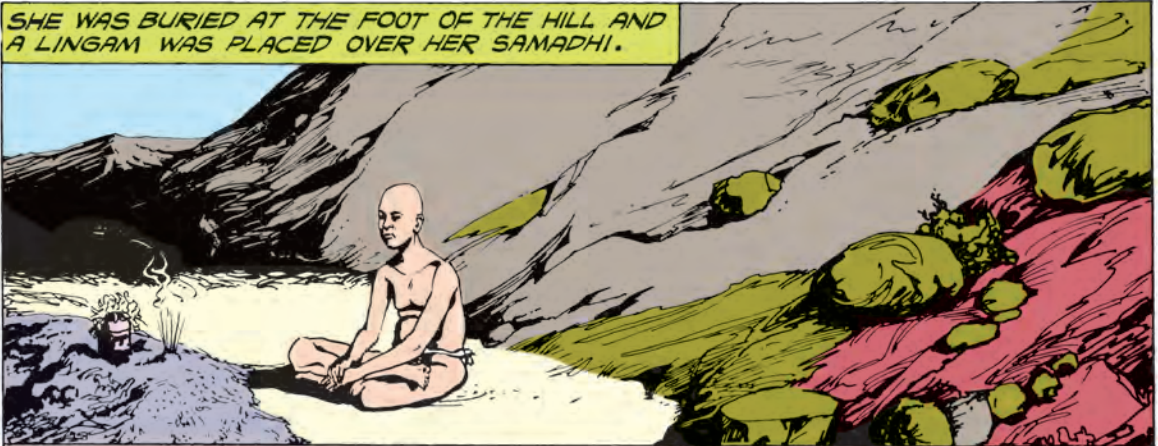
SOON, THE NEED FOR A BIGGER ASHRAM WAS FELT. IT WAS BUILT A LITTLE ABOVE VIRUPAKSHA CAVE AND WAS NAMED SKANDASHRAM.



SOME YEARS LATER, ALAGAMMAL FELL SERIOUSLY ILL. AS DEATH APPROACHED, THE MAHARSHI PLACED HIS HANDS ON HER HEAD AND CHEST AND GAVE HER MUKTI*

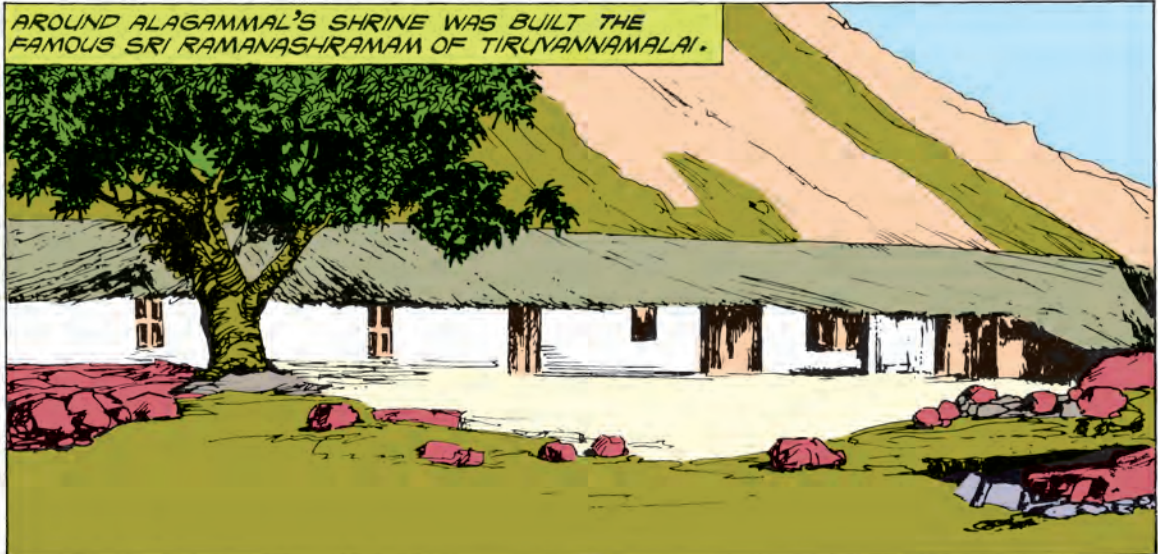


SHE WAS BURIED AT THE FOOT OF THE HILL AND A LINGAM WAS PLACED OVER HER SAMADHI.



AND, ONE DAY, THE MAHARSHI LEFT SKANDASHRAM AND CAME TO LIVE BY THIS SHRINE.

AROUND ALAGAMMAL'S SHRINE WAS BUILT THE FAMOUS SRI RAMANASHRAMAM OF TIRUVANNAMALAI.

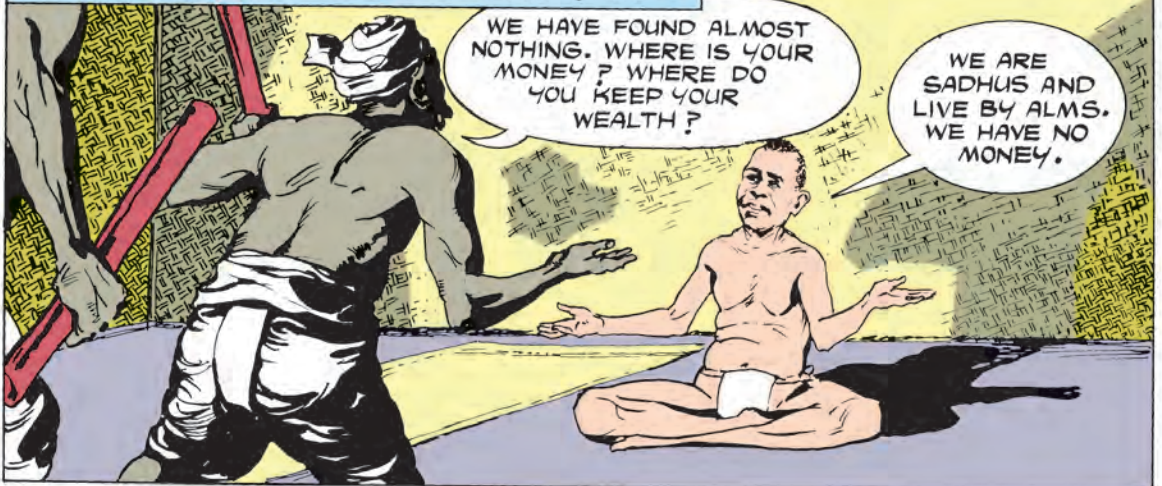


* FREEDOM FROM FURTHER BIRTH

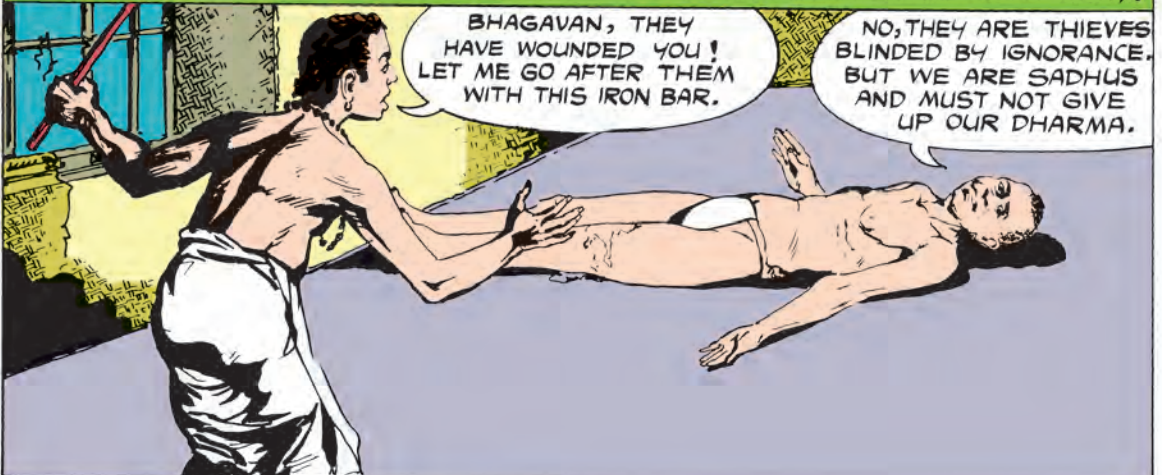
THE ASHRAM GREW AND BEGAN TO FEED AND ACCOMMODATE DEVOTEES. ONE NIGHT, THIEVES RAIDED IT.

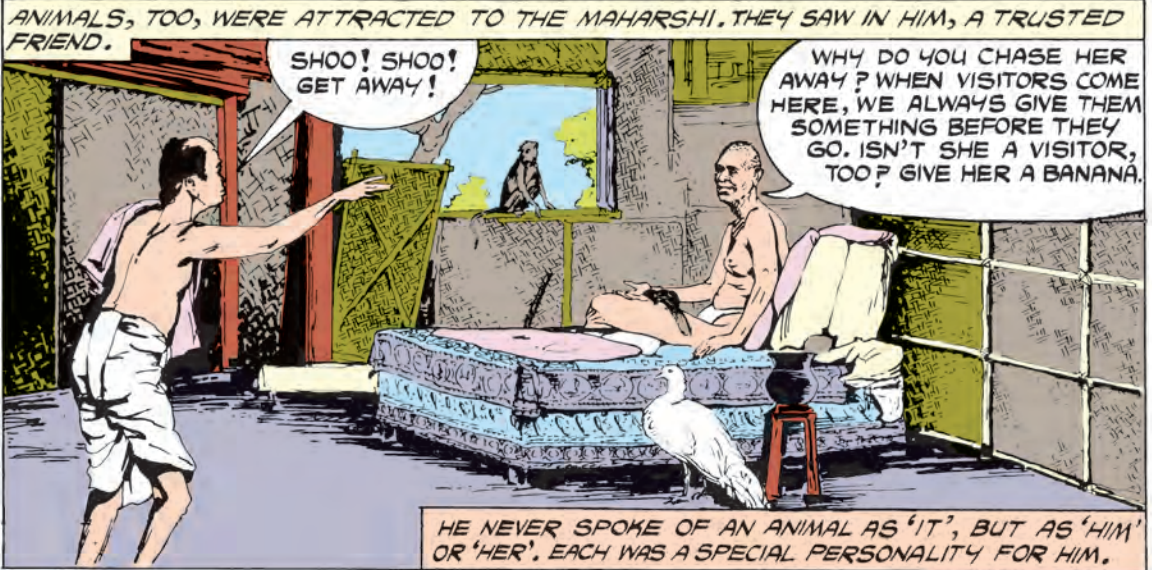


THE THIEVES MADE A THOROUGH SEARCH, BUT—



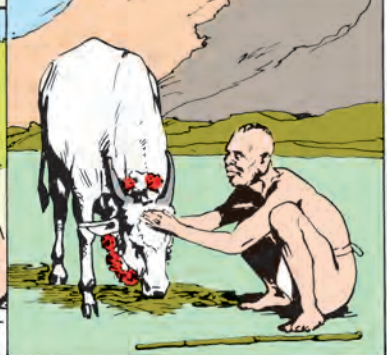
THE ANGRY THIEVES BEAT THE MAHARSHI AND THE ASHRAM INMATES AND WENT AWAY.





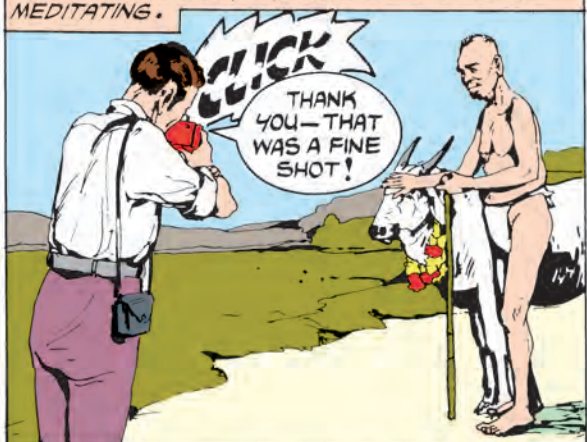
ONE DAY, WHEN SOME DEVOTEES LOOKED INTO THE KITCHEN GARDEN, THEY WERE SURPRISED TO SEE THE MAHARSHI FEEDING GROUNDNUTS TO A GOAT, A SQUIRREL AND A MONKEY AND EATING SOME HIMSELF—SAINT AND ANIMALS THOROUGHLY ENJOYING THEIR GARDEN PARTY.

BEAUTIFUL LAKSHMI WAS THE ASHRAM'S FIRST COW. SHE ADORED THE MAHARSHI.



ONE MAATU PONGAL DAY*, A PHOTOGRAPHER WAS VERY KEEN TO TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH, BUT LAKSHMI WAS RESTLESS.

THE MOMENT SHE HEARD THOSE CALMING WORDS, LAKSHMI STOOD STILL AT ONCE AND CLOSED HER EYES AS IF SHE WERE MEDITATING.



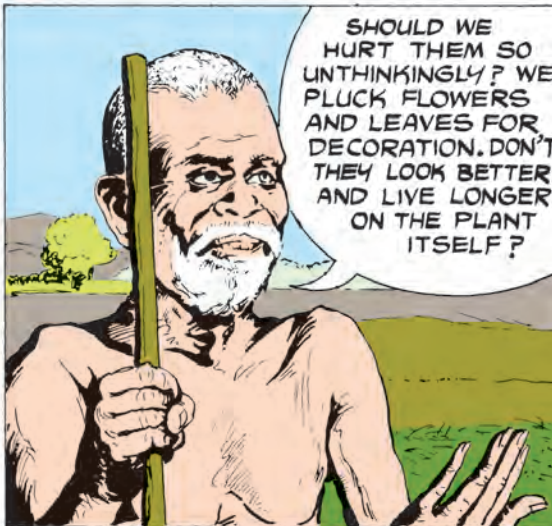
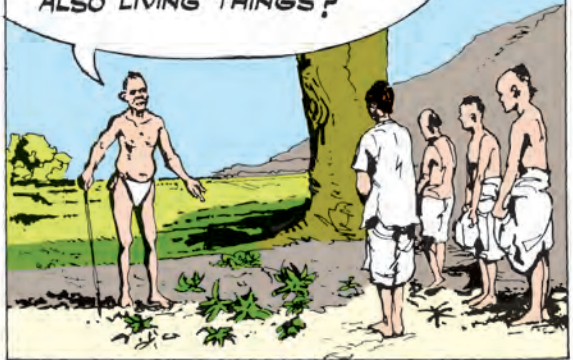
* CATTLE FESTIVAL

IT WAS NOT FOR ANIMALS ALONE THAT THE MAHARSHI FELT DEEP AFFECTION, BUT FOR ALL LIVING THINGS. ONE DAY, SOME MEN WERE THROWING STONES TO BRING DOWN FRUIT FROM A MANGO TREE.



JUST THEN THE MAHARSHI CAME THERE AND HIS SAINTLY CALM GAVE WAY TO A RARE FURY.

THIS TREE GIVES US ITS FRUIT. IS IT TO BE STONED IN RETURN? ARE NOT TREES AND LEAVES ALSO LIVING THINGS?

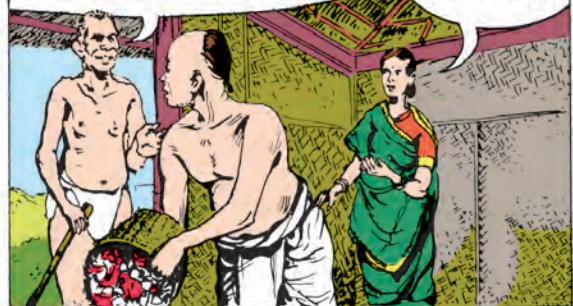


SHOULD WE HURT THEM SO UNTHINKINGLY? WE PLUCK FLOWERS AND LEAVES FOR DECORATION. DON'T THEY LOOK BETTER, AND LIVE LONGER ON THE PLANT ITSELF?

ANOTHER HABIT THE MAHARSHI FIRMLY DISCOURAGED WAS WASTE. EVERY PIN AND LOOSE PAPER WAS CAREFULLY LAID AWAY FOR FUTURE USE. ONE DAY —

WHY ARE THOSE ROSE PETALS BEING THROWN AWAY? LET US USE THEM. PUT THEM IN TODAY'S PAYASAM*.

DRIED ROSE PETALS? BUT... BUT... BHAGAVAN...



HOWEVER, THE PETALS WERE USED IN THE PAYASAM. LATER, WHEN IT WAS SERVED—



THEY SEEM TO BE ENJOYING IT VERY MUCH!

DO YOU THINK THERE IS MORE FOR A SECOND HELPING?

* A SWEET DISH

THE MAHARSHI HELPED IN CHOPPING VEGETABLES AND IN GRINDING TASTY CHUTNEYS. HE NEVER LET THE PREVIOUS DAY'S FOOD GO WASTE.

THAT SAMBAR* IS YESTERDAY'S. I'LL GIVE IT TO THE BEGGARS.

WHY SHOULD ONLY BEGGARS EAT LEFT-OVERS? ARE THEY ANY DIFFERENT FROM US?

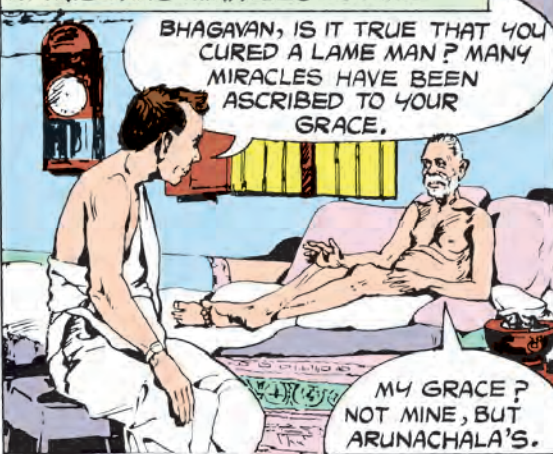


AND THE MAHARSHI HEATED THE SAMBAR HIMSELF! IN THIS WAY, HE GENTLY CORRECTED THE STRICT, ORTHODOX BELIEFS OF SOME OF HIS DEVOTEES. AND HIS PRESENCE IN THE KITCHEN MADE COOKING NOT A TIRESOME CHORE, BUT A PLEASURE!

HE ALSO DISCOURAGED PEOPLE FROM ATTRIBUTING MIRACLES TO HIM.

BHAGAVAN, IS IT TRUE THAT YOU CURED A LAME MAN? MANY MIRACLES HAVE BEEN ASCRIBED TO YOUR GRACE.

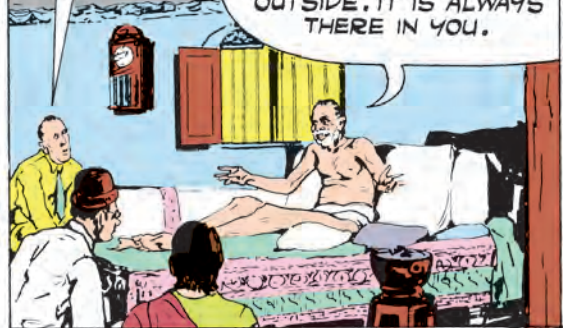
MY GRACE? NOT MINE, BUT ARUNACHALA'S.



PEOPLE FROM ALL PARTS OF INDIA AND ABROAD CAME TO THE MAHARSHI.

HOW CAN I ATTAIN THE TRUTH?

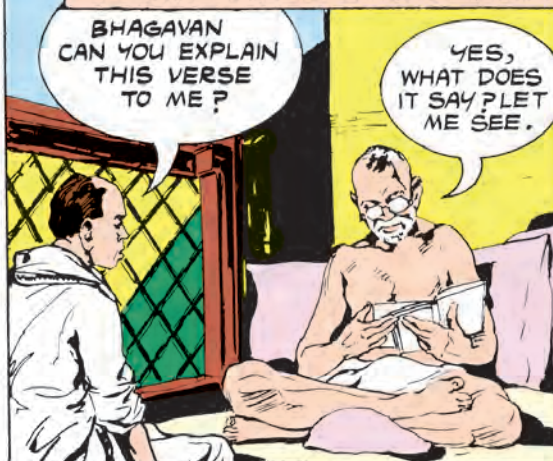
ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION: 'WHO AM I?' THE TRUTH LIES WITHIN YOU. DON'T SEEK IT OUTSIDE. IT IS ALWAYS THERE IN YOU.



ALL WERE ALIKE TO BHAGAVAN, SCHOLAR OR SIMPLETON, OLD MAN OR CHILD.

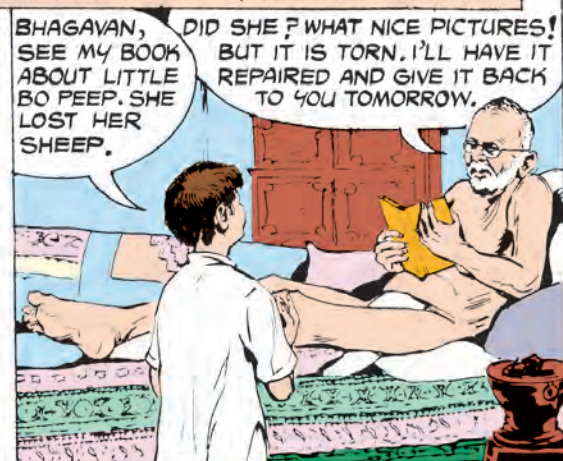
BHAGAVAN CAN YOU EXPLAIN THIS VERSE TO ME?

YES, WHAT DOES IT SAY? LET ME SEE.



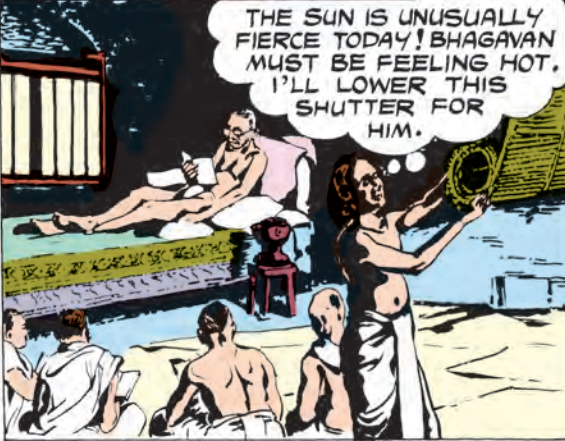
BHAGAVAN, SEE MY BOOK ABOUT LITTLE BO PEEP. SHE LOST HER SHEEP.

DID SHE? WHAT NICE PICTURES! BUT IT IS TORN. I'LL HAVE IT REPAIRED AND GIVE IT BACK TO YOU TOMORROW.



*A LENTIL CURRY

SUCH A GREAT SAGE AS THE MAHARSHI WAS BOUND TO BE TREATED WITH SPECIAL CARE. ONE DAY—



THE SUN IS UNUSUALLY FIERCE TODAY! BHAGAVAN MUST BE FEELING HOT. I'LL LOWER THIS SHUTTER FOR HIM.

THE MAHARSHI NOTICED THIS AT ONCE.

WHY HAVE YOU LOWERED ONLY THE SHUTTER ON MY SIDE OF THE ROOM? A SWAMI MUST NOT BE EXPOSED TO THE SUN OR THE WIND; BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER IF OTHERS ARE IS THAT IT?

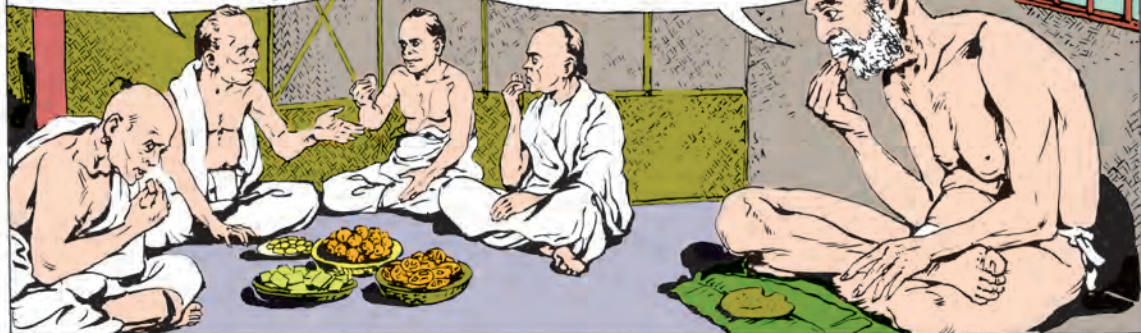


THESE LITTLE ATTENTIONS UPSET THE MAHARSHI VERY MUCH.

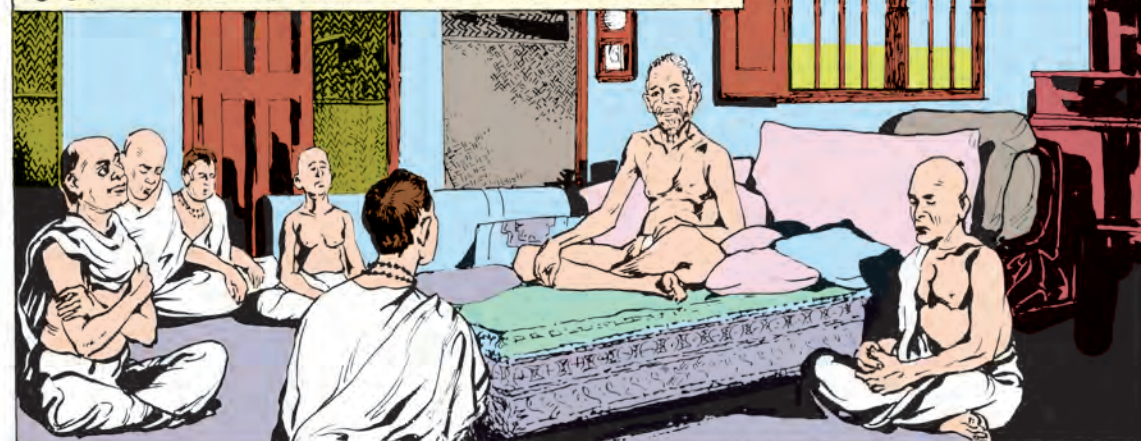
BUT BEHIND HIS REPROACHES WAS HIS LOVE FOR HIS DEVOTEES.

LOOK AT US EATING THESE EXCELLENT SWEETS AND LOOK AT YOU, BHAGAVAN, EATING SOME DRY, BADLY COOKED FOOD! IS THAT FAIR?

THERE ARE ALWAYS PEOPLE TO EAT SWEETS BUT WHO WILL EAT THIS SIMPLE FOOD WHICH A VERY OLD WOMAN BROUGHT WITH SO MUCH DEVOTION?



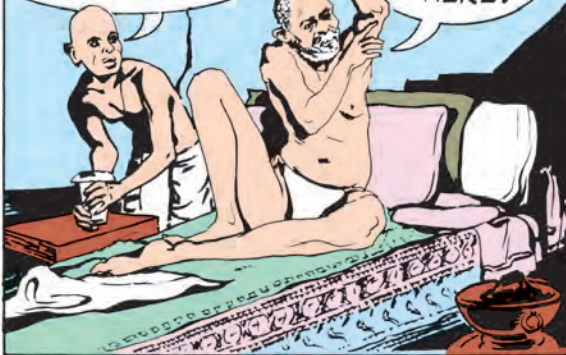
MOST OF THE TIME THE MAHARSHI SPOKE VERY LITTLE. IN THE SILENT MEDITATION HALL, A DEEP PEACE WOULD ENVELOP EVERYONE PRESENT. ONE GLANCE FROM HIM WAS ENOUGH TO GIVE CONSOLATION AND HOPE TO THE AFFLICTED.



ONE DAY —

BHAGAVAN, YOU HAVE BEEN RUBBING YOUR LEFT ELBOW THESE PAST FEW DAYS. HAVE YOU HURT YOURSELF?

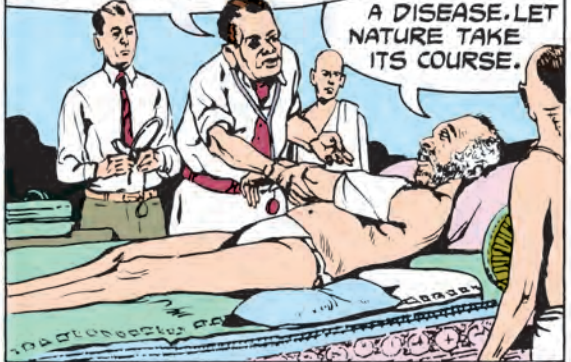
THERE SEEMS TO BE A SMALL GROWTH HERE.



THE GROWTH BEGAN TO INCREASE IN SIZE. THEN TO EVERYONE'S SHOCK, IT WAS DIAGNOSED AS CANCER.

BHAGAVAN, WE WILL HAVE TO REMOVE THE GROWTH SURGICALLY. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO CURB THIS DISEASE.

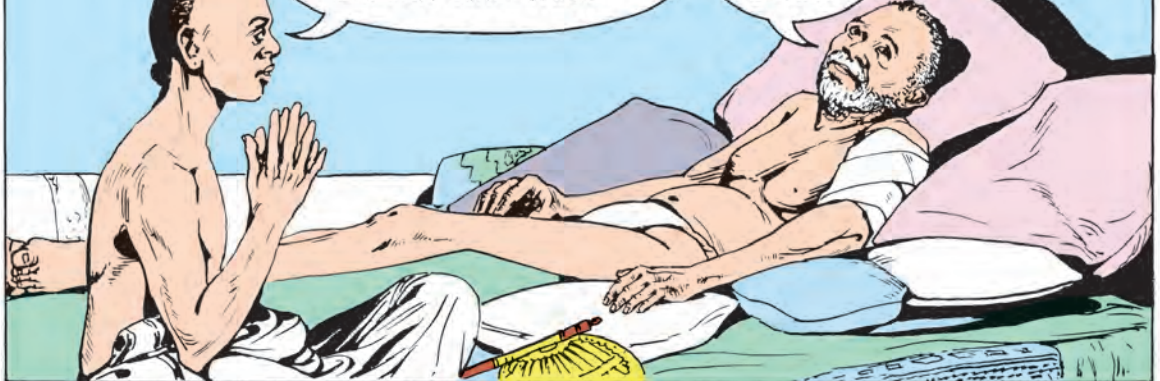
THE BODY ITSELF IS A DISEASE. LET NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE.



BUT THE DISEASE BEGAN TO SPREAD RAPIDLY. FINALLY —

MAHARSHI, PLEASE ALLOW THE DOCTOR TO REMOVE THE GROWTH. WE CAN'T LET YOU SUFFER LIKE THIS.

ALL RIGHT. YOU MAY HAVE IT DONE.



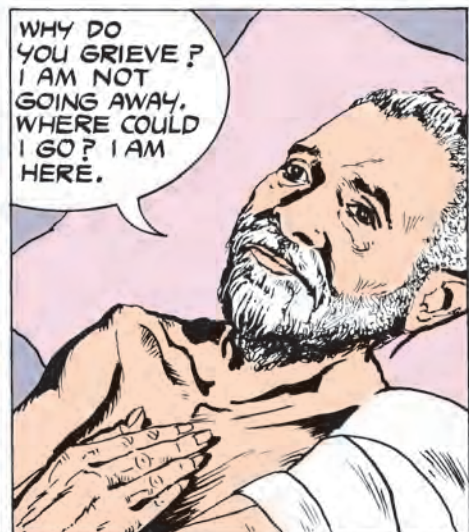
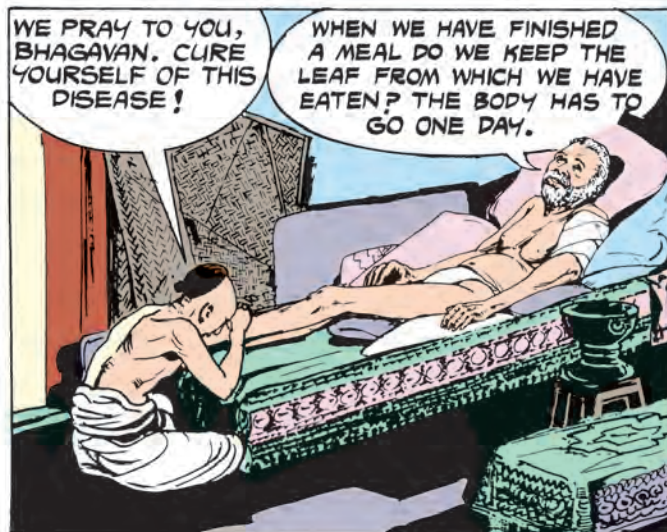
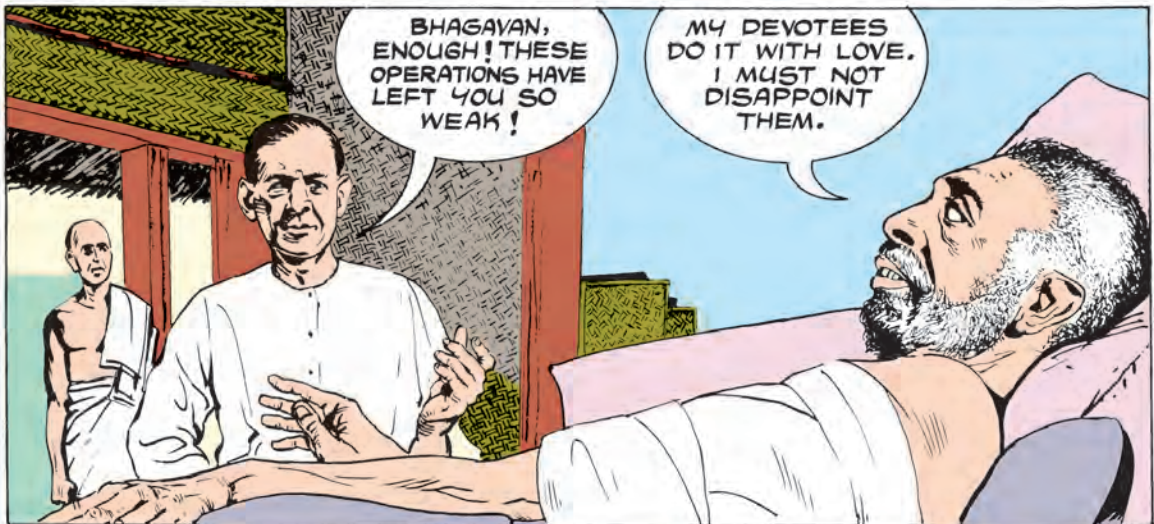
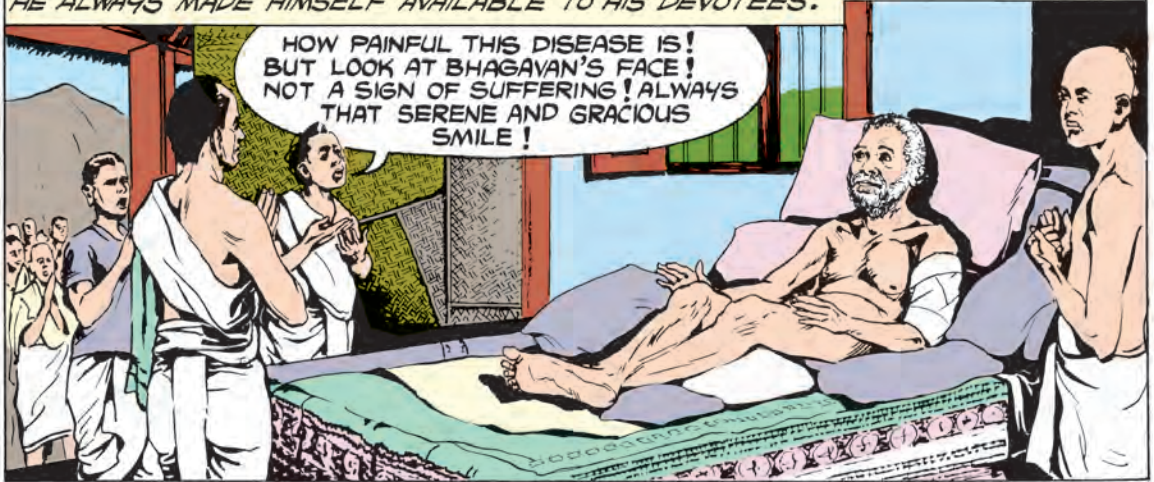
THE OPERATION WAS PERFORMED. BUT AFTER SOME TIME, ANOTHER GROWTH APPEARED.

BHAGAVAN, WHAT SHALL WE DO? NOTHING SEEMS TO WORK, NEITHER SURGERY, NOR HOMOEOPATHY NOR HERBAL TREATMENT.

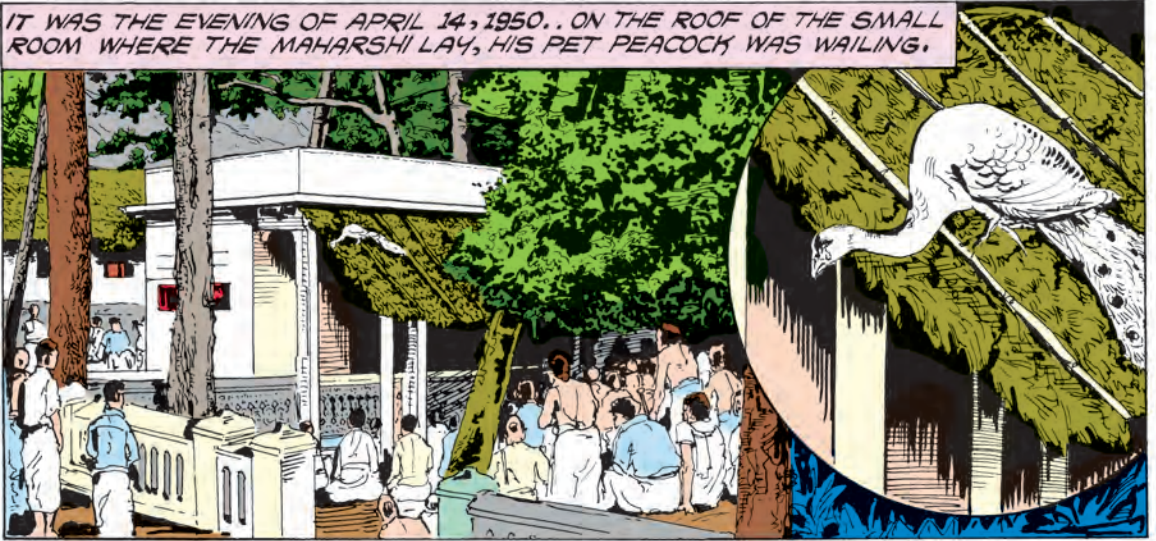
FROM THE BEGINNING, I WANTED THINGS TO TAKE THEIR COURSE.



TO PLEASE HIS DEVOTEES, THE MAHARSHI UNDERWENT FURTHER OPERATIONS. THERE WAS NO IMPROVEMENT IN HIS CONDITION. BUT HOWEVER WEAK HE FELT, HE ALWAYS MADE HIMSELF AVAILABLE TO HIS DEVOTEES.



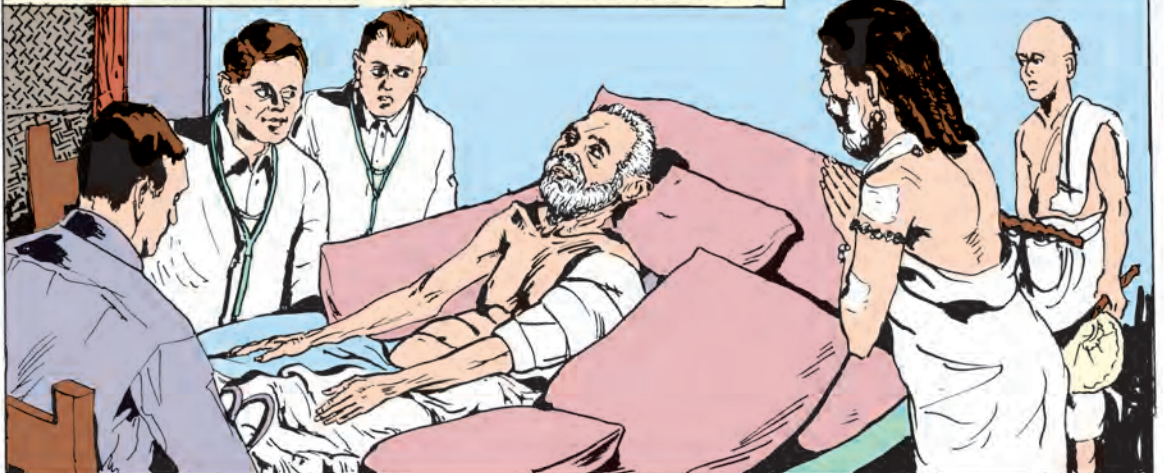
IT WAS THE EVENING OF APRIL 14, 1950... ON THE ROOF OF THE SMALL ROOM WHERE THE MAHARSHI LAY, HIS PET PEACOCK WAS WAILING.



HUNDREDS OF GRIEVING DEVOTEES HAD FLOCKED TO TIRUVANNAMALAI. SOME OF THEM BEGAN TO SING THE MAHARSHI'S HYMN. IT WAS TAKEN UP BY EVERYONE TILL IT BECAME A LOUD, RINGING CHANT OF DEVOTION.



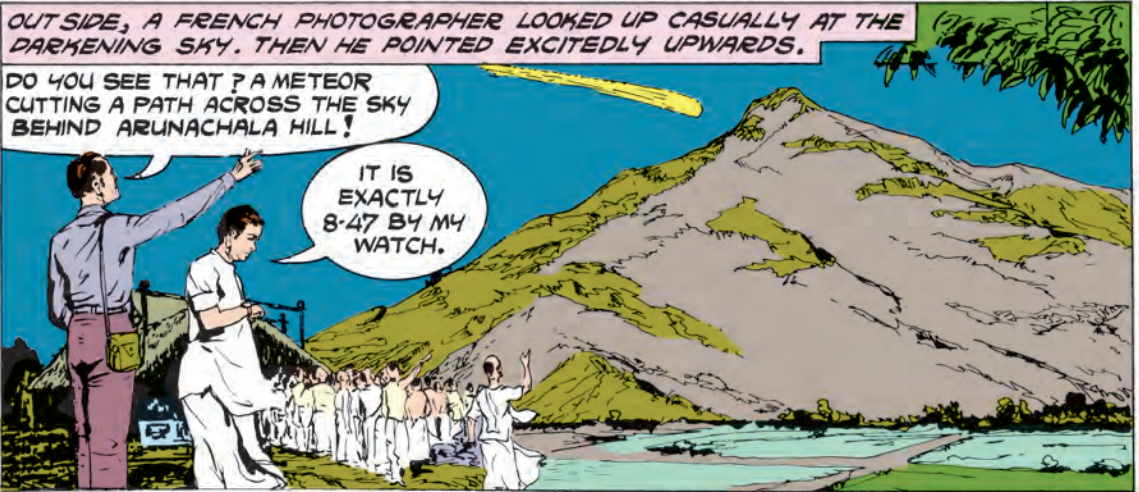
INSIDE THE ROOM, THE MAHARSHI OPENED HIS EYES A LITTLE. THE EYES SEEMED TO FLASH BRIEFLY AND TEARS OF ECSTASY ROLLED OUT.



OUTSIDE, A FRENCH PHOTOGRAPHER LOOKED UP CASUALLY AT THE DARKENING SKY. THEN HE POINTED EXCITEDLY UPWARDS.

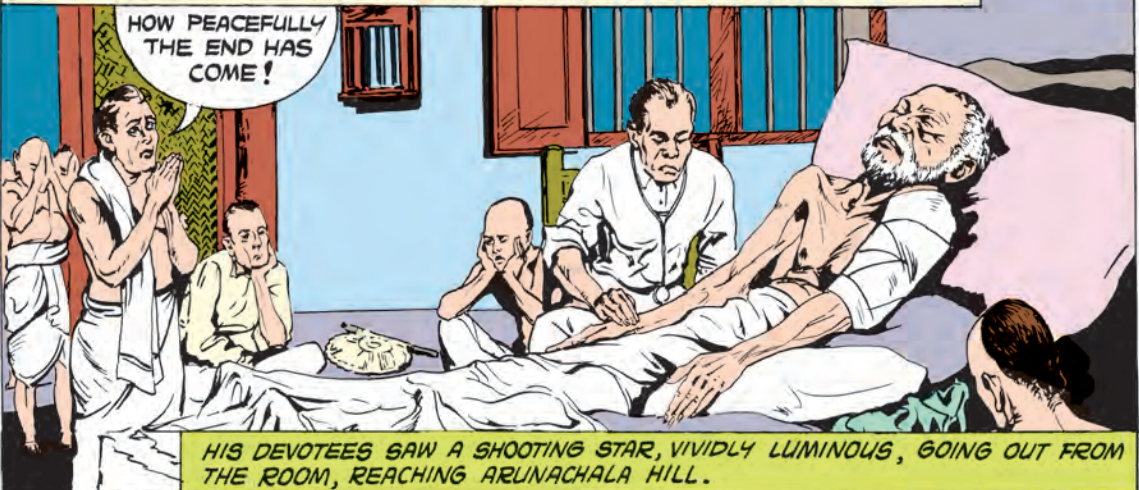
DO YOU SEE THAT ? A METEOR CUTTING A PATH ACROSS THE SKY BEHIND ARUNACHALA HILL !

IT IS EXACTLY 8-47 BY MY WATCH.



INSIDE, PRECISELY AT THAT MOMENT, THE MAHARSHI'S BREATHING STOPPED.

HOW PEACEFULLY THE END HAS COME !



HIS DEVOTEES SAW A SHOOTING STAR, VIVIDLY LUMINOUS, GOING OUT FROM THE ROOM, REACHING ARUNACHALA HILL.

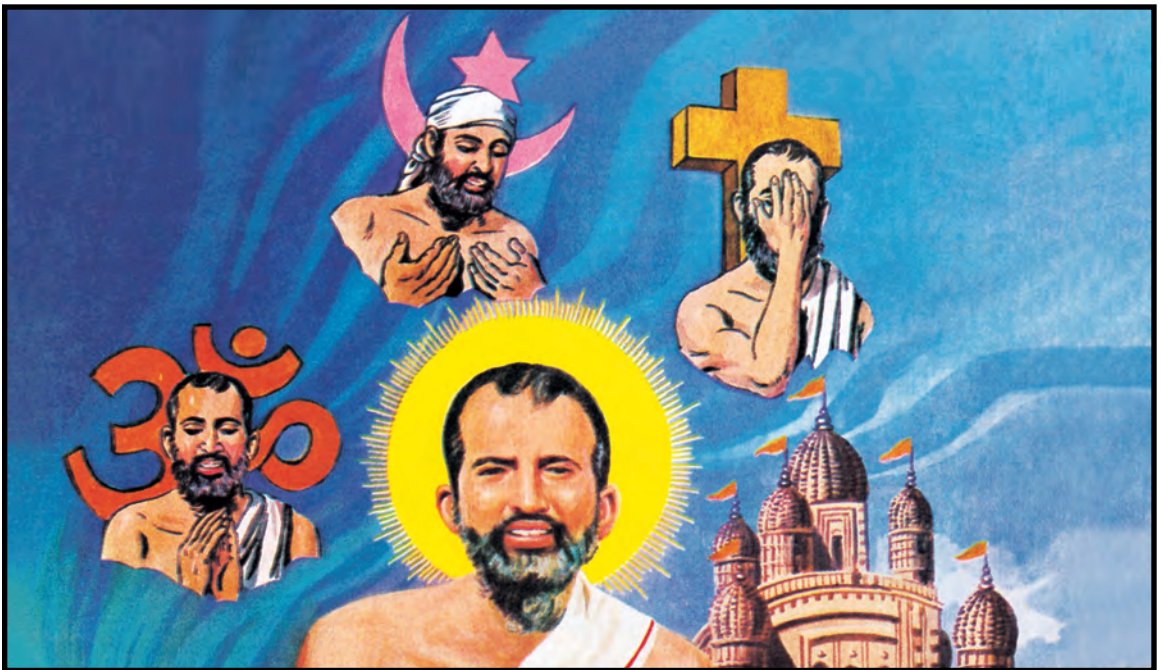
THE MAHARSHI IS GONE. YET HE IS HERE.



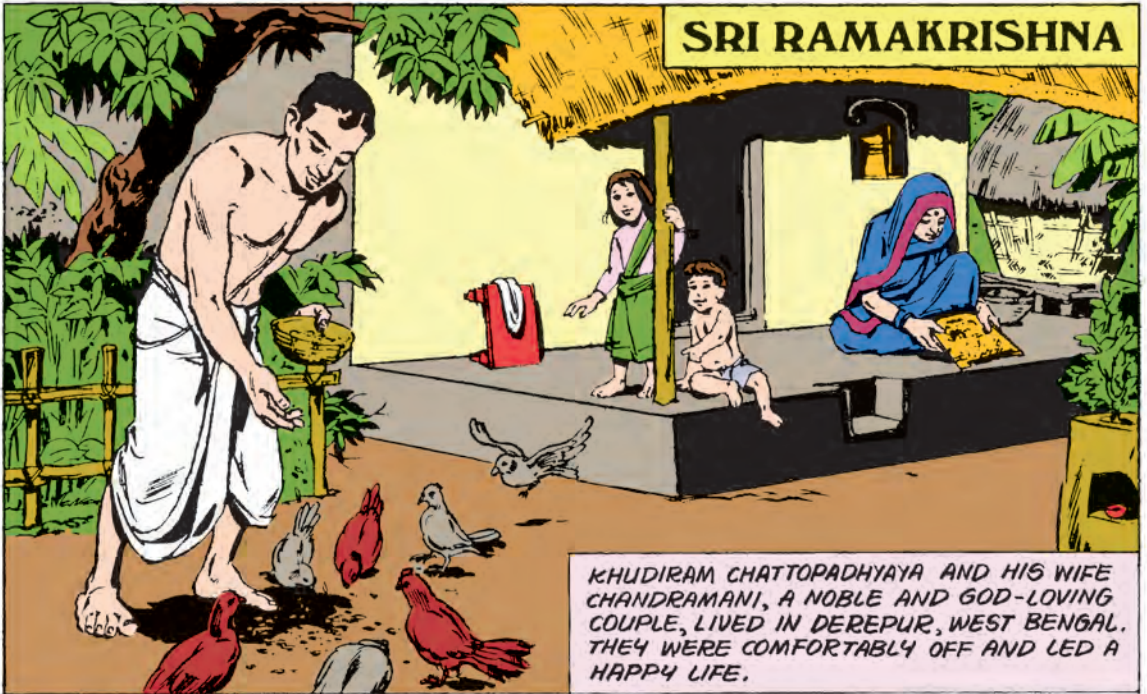
ON THE COUCH WHERE HE HAD SAT FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, HIS LIFE-LIKE PORTRAIT HAS BEEN PLACED. HERE HIS DEVOTEES STILL FEEL HIS PRESENCE, AS COMFORTING AND PEACE-GIVING AS BEFORE.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE SAINT OF DAKSHINESWAR

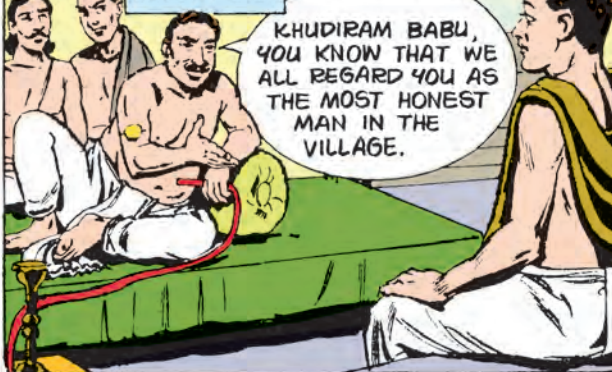


SRI RAMAKRISHNA



KHUDIRAM CHATTOPADHYAYA AND HIS WIFE CHANDRAMANI, A NOBLE AND GOD-LOVING COUPLE, LIVED IN DEREPUR, WEST BENGAL. THEY WERE COMFORTABLY OFF AND LED A HAPPY LIFE.

THEN ONE DAY, RAMANAND ROY, THE WEALTHIEST MAN IN DEREPUR, SENT FOR KHUDIRAM.



KHUDIRAM BABU, YOU KNOW THAT WE ALL REGARD YOU AS THE MOST HONEST MAN IN THE VILLAGE.

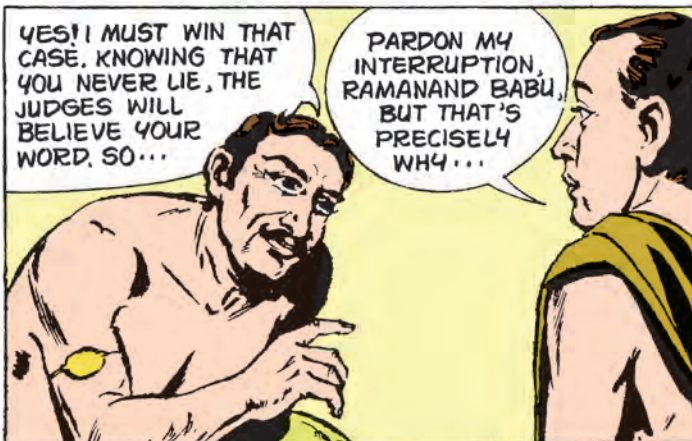
I WANT YOU TO BE MY WITNESS IN THE CASE I AM FIGHTING.

AGAINST THAT POOR FARMER?



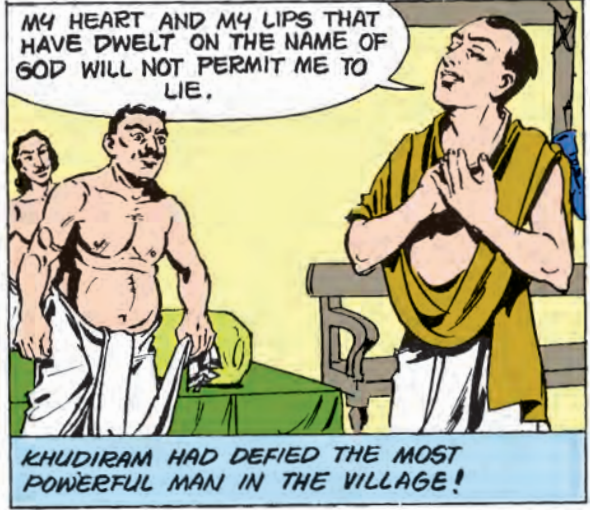
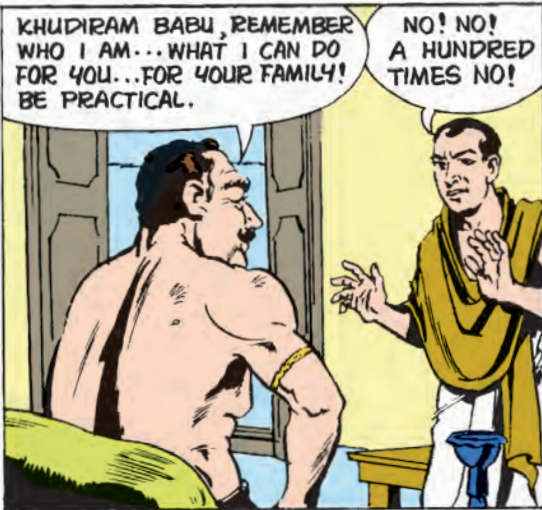
YES! I MUST WIN THAT CASE, KNOWING THAT YOU NEVER LIE, THE JUDGES WILL BELIEVE YOUR WORD, SO...

PARDON MY INTERRUPTION, RAMANAND BABU, BUT THAT'S PRECISELY WHY...



... I WILL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS.

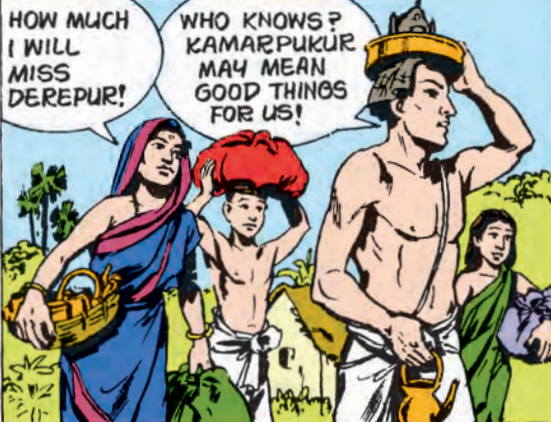




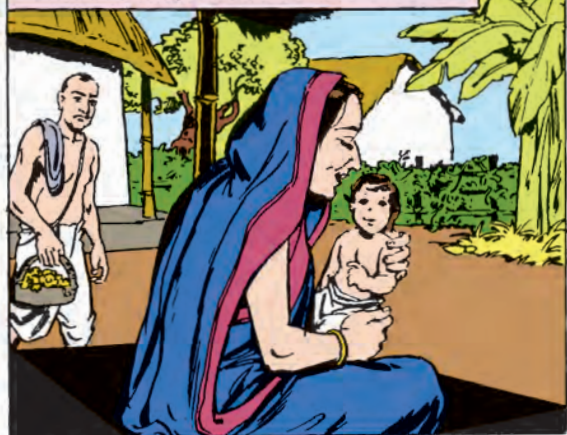
AND KHUDIRAM HAD TO PAY FOR IT. RAMANAND BROUGHT A FALSE CASE AGAINST HIM THIS TIME, AND WON IT BY UNFAIR MEANS. KHUDIRAM HAD TO FORFEIT ALL HIS PROPERTY.

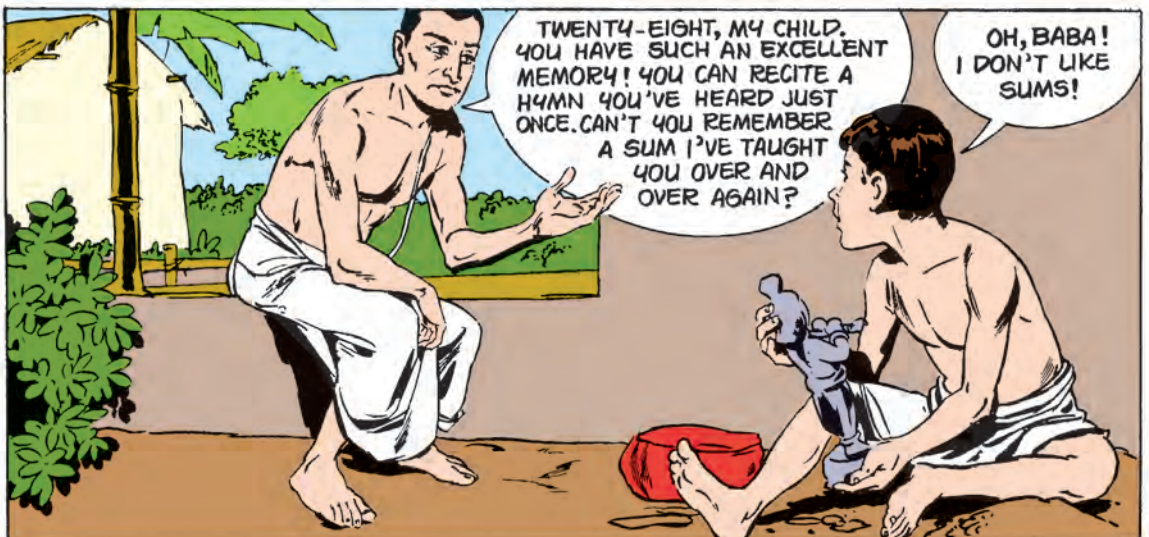
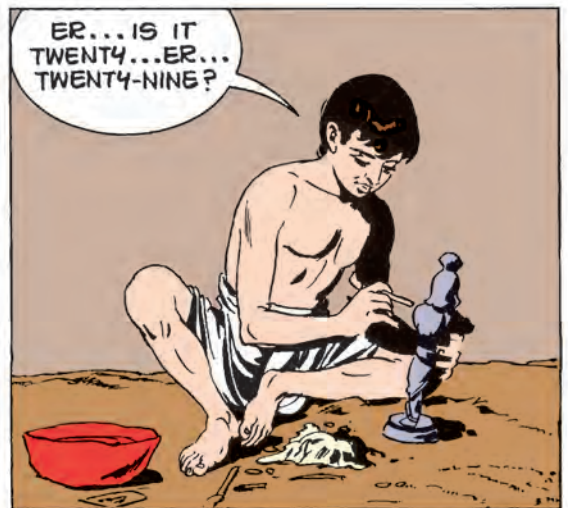
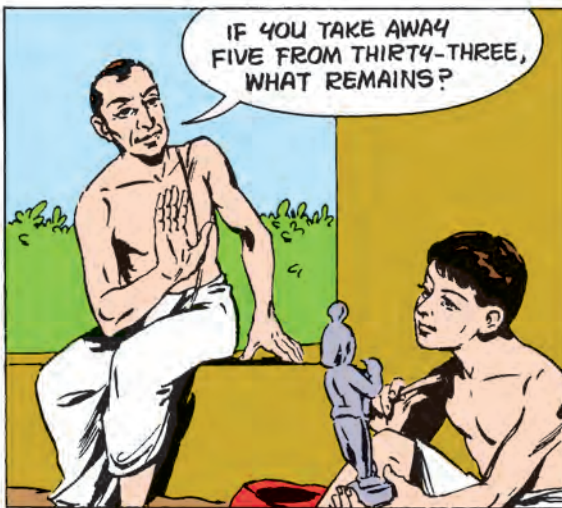
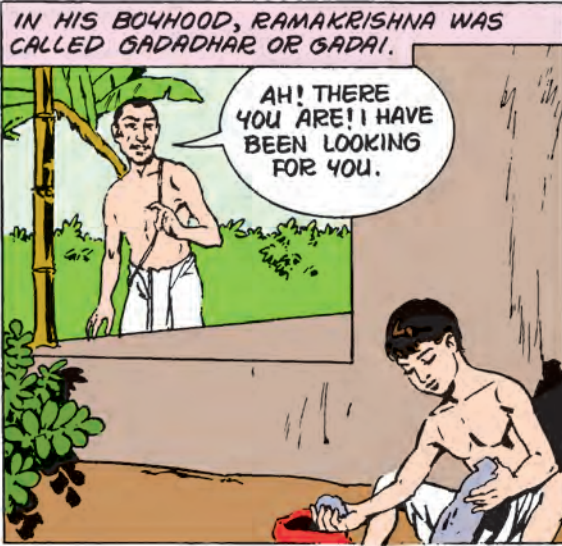


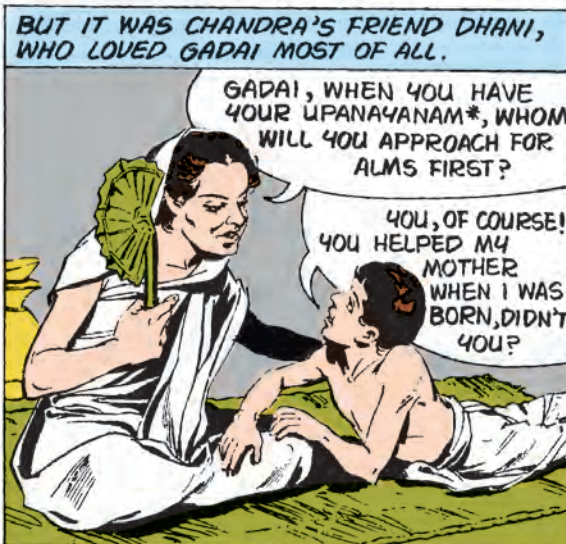
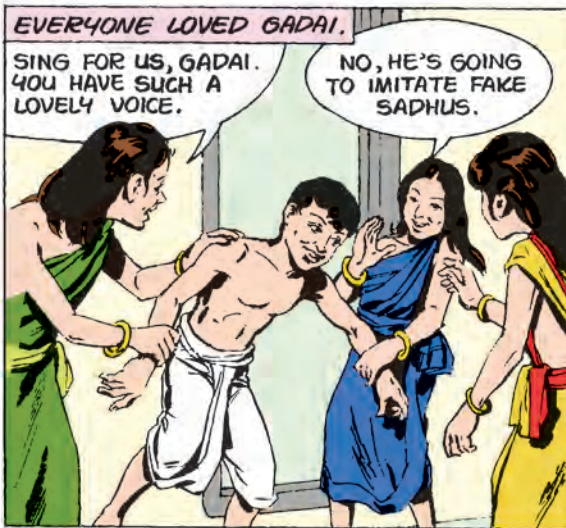
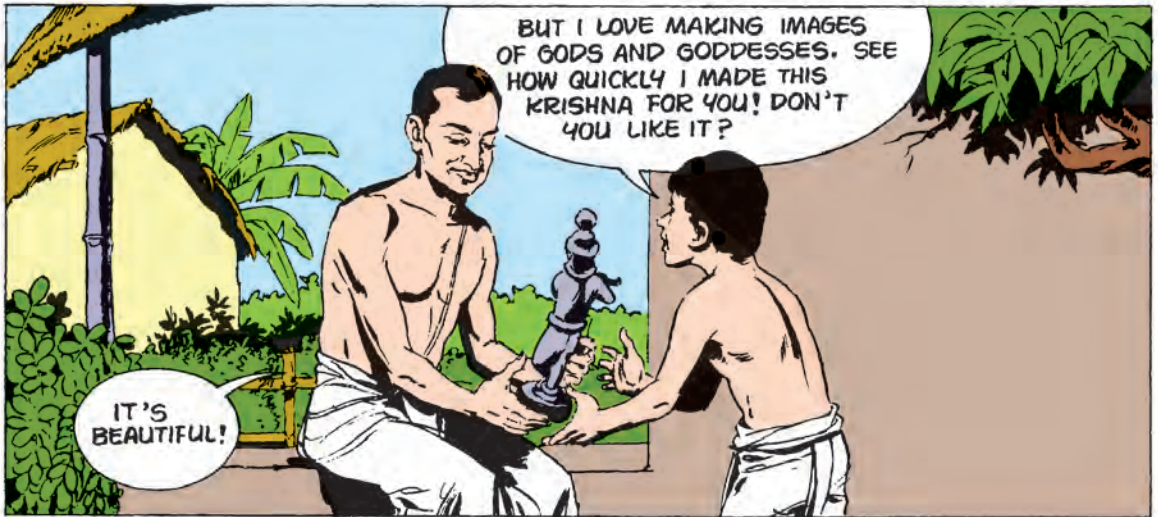
FORTUNATELY, ONE OF KHUDIRAM'S FRIENDS OFFERED THEM A HOUSE AT THE VILLAGE OF KAMARPUKUR.



AND SO IT DID! FOR IT WAS AT KAMARPUKUR THAT RAMAKRISHNA WAS BORN. HE WAS THEIR FOURTH CHILD.

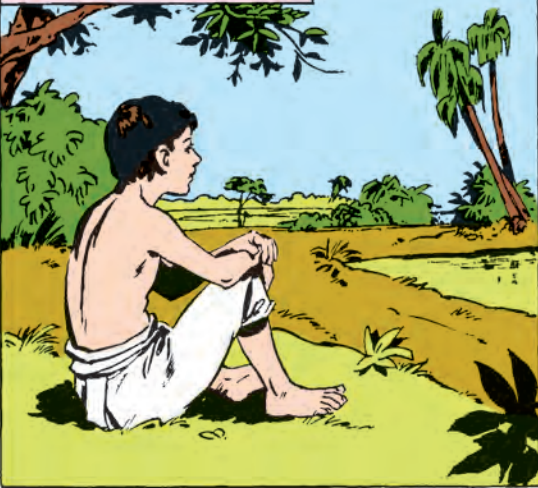




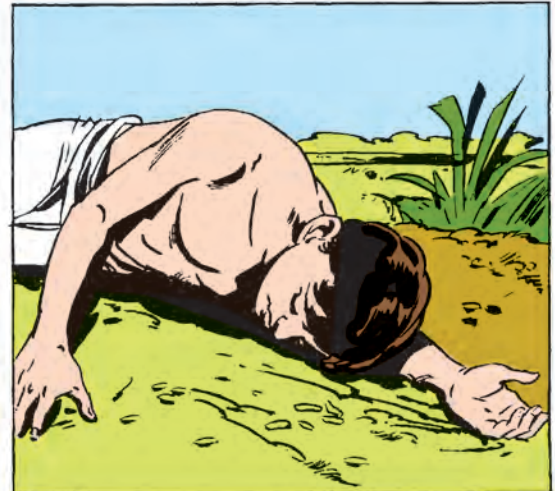
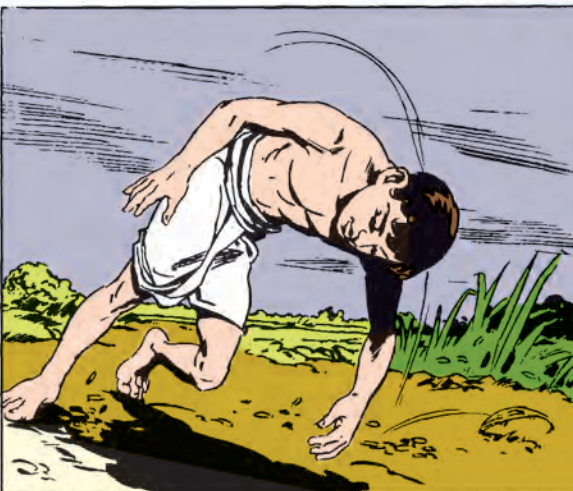
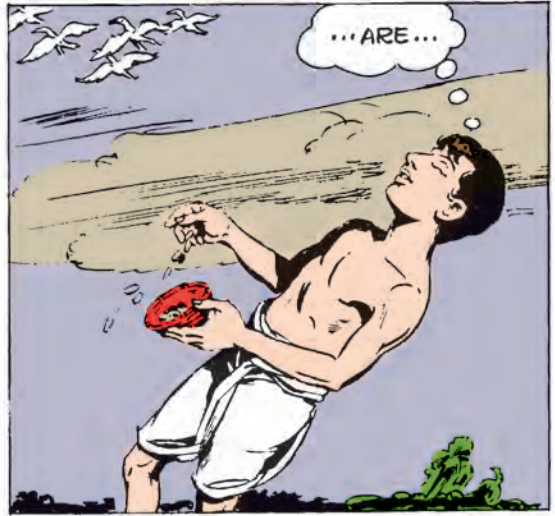
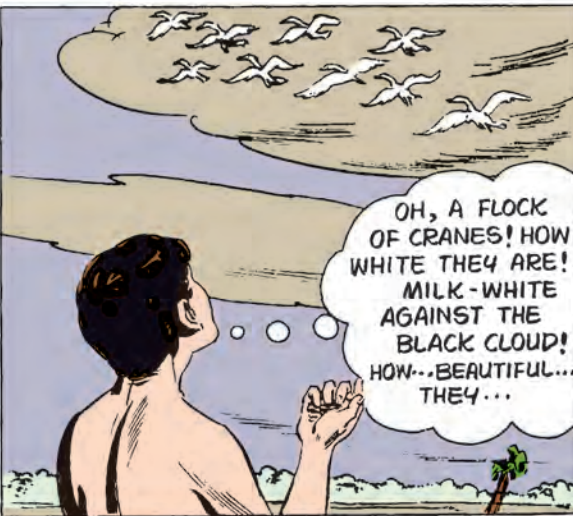
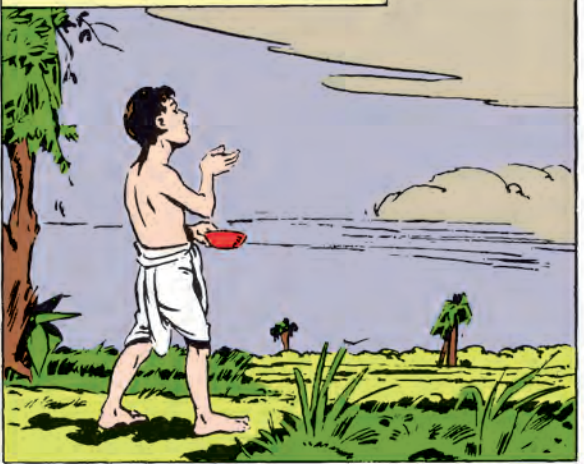


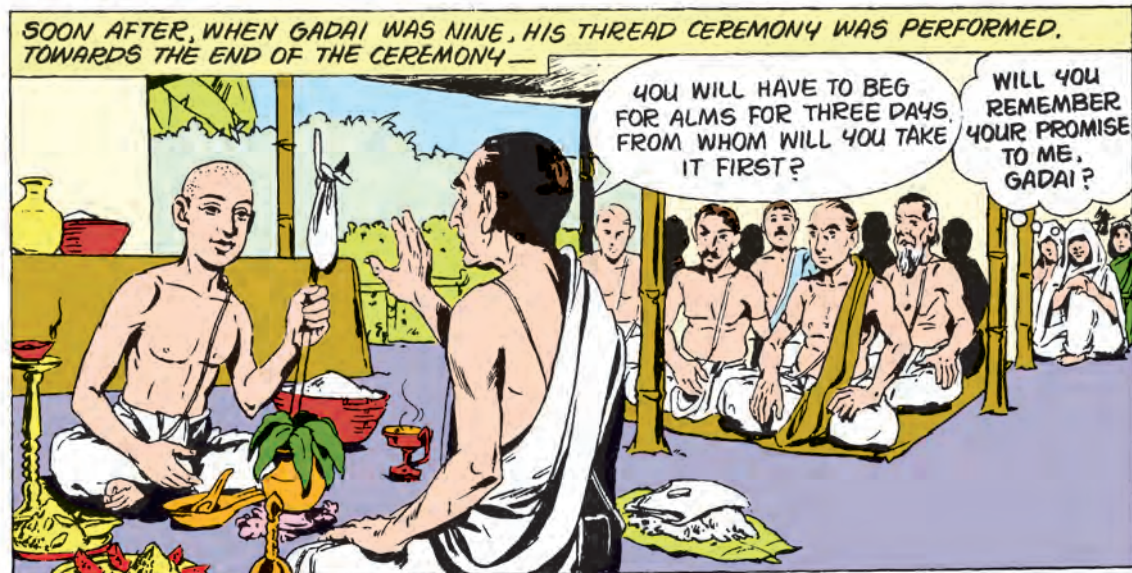
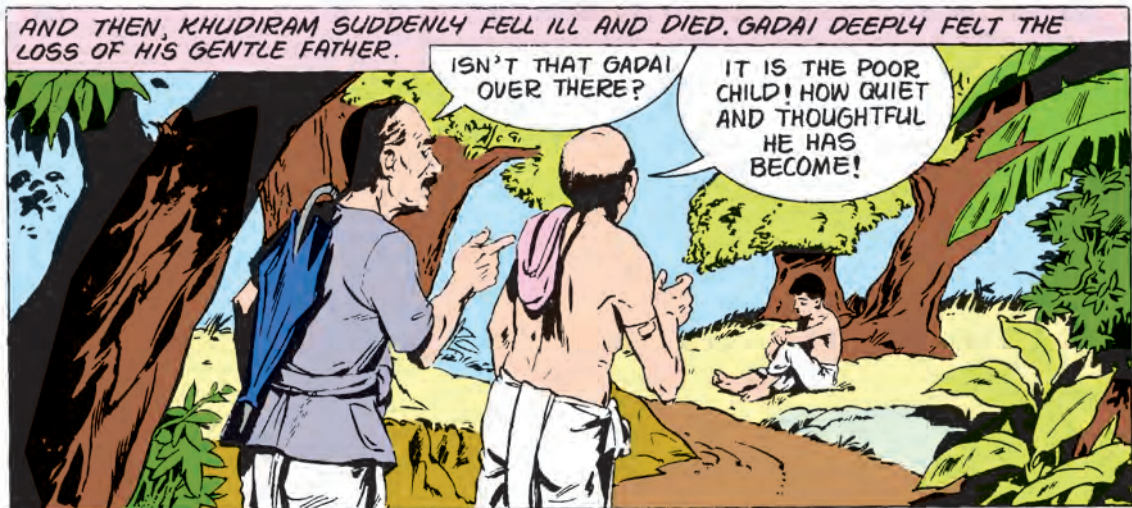
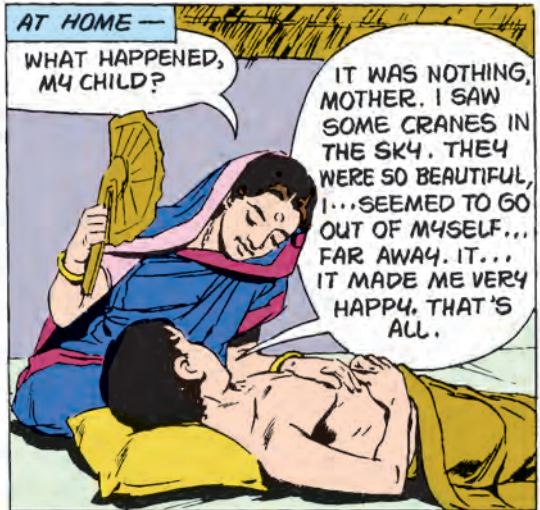
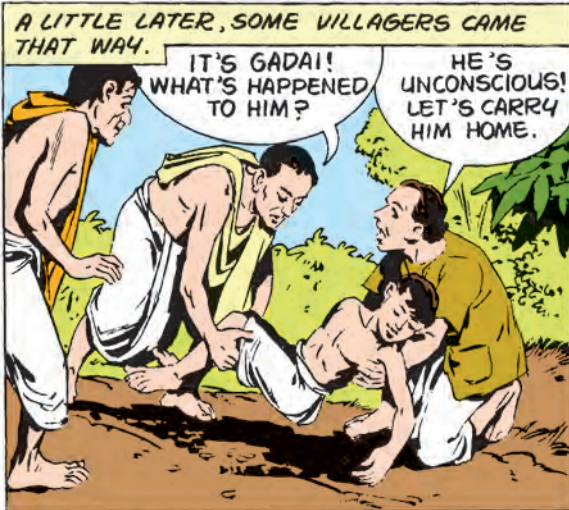
* THREAD CEREMONY

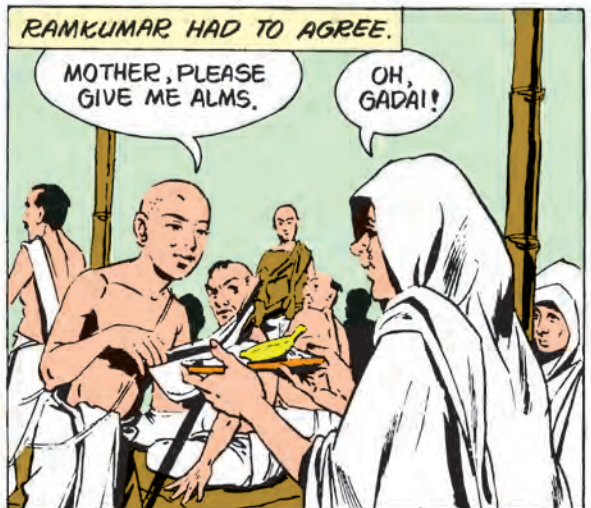
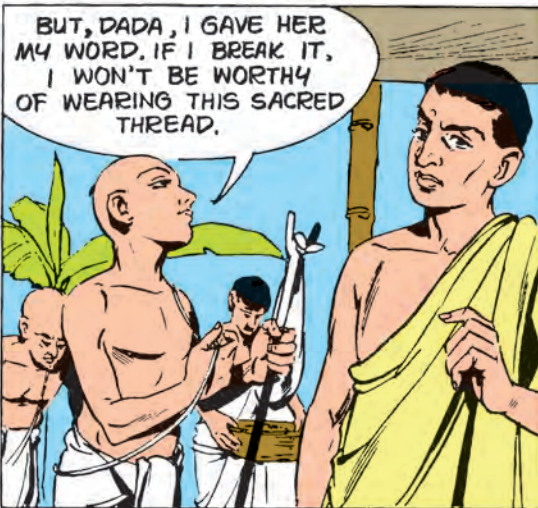
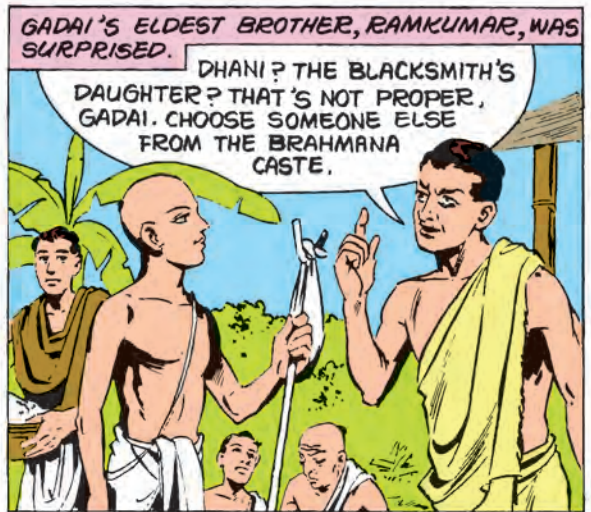
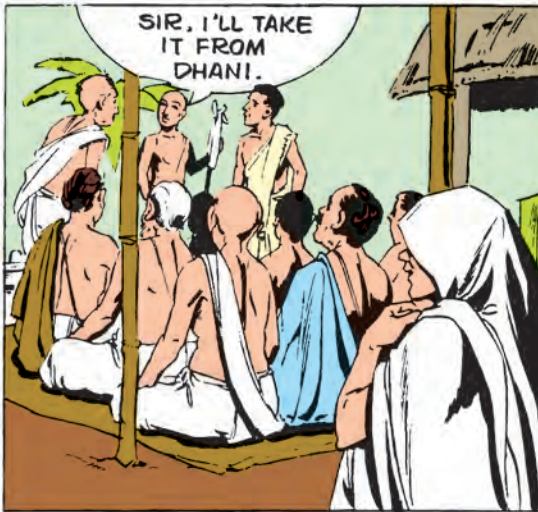
THOUGH FULL OF FUN, GADAI OFTEN LIKED TO BE ALONE WITH THE BEAUTY AND SERENITY OF NATURE.

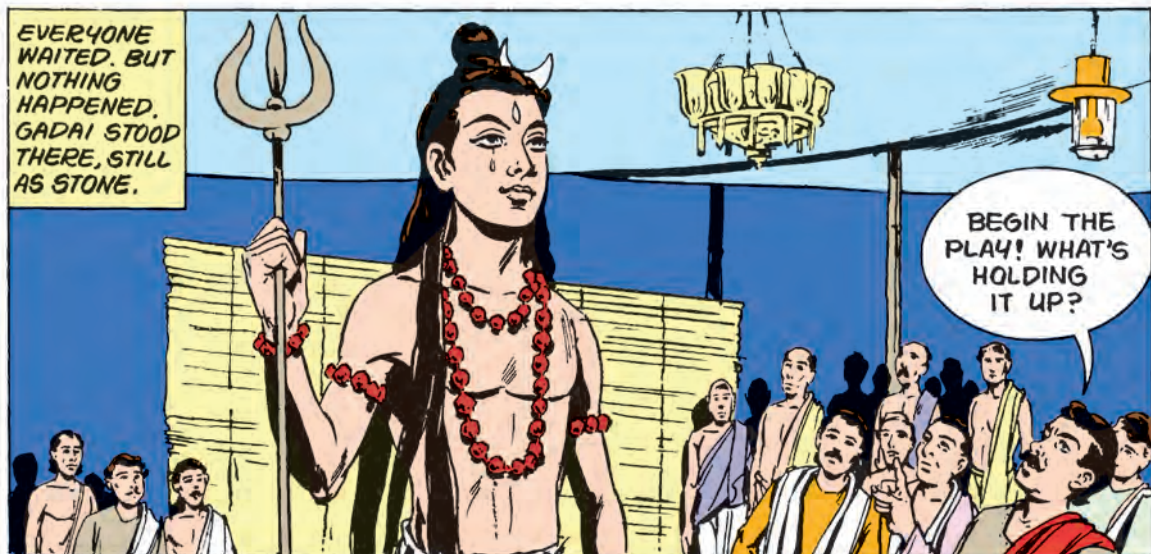
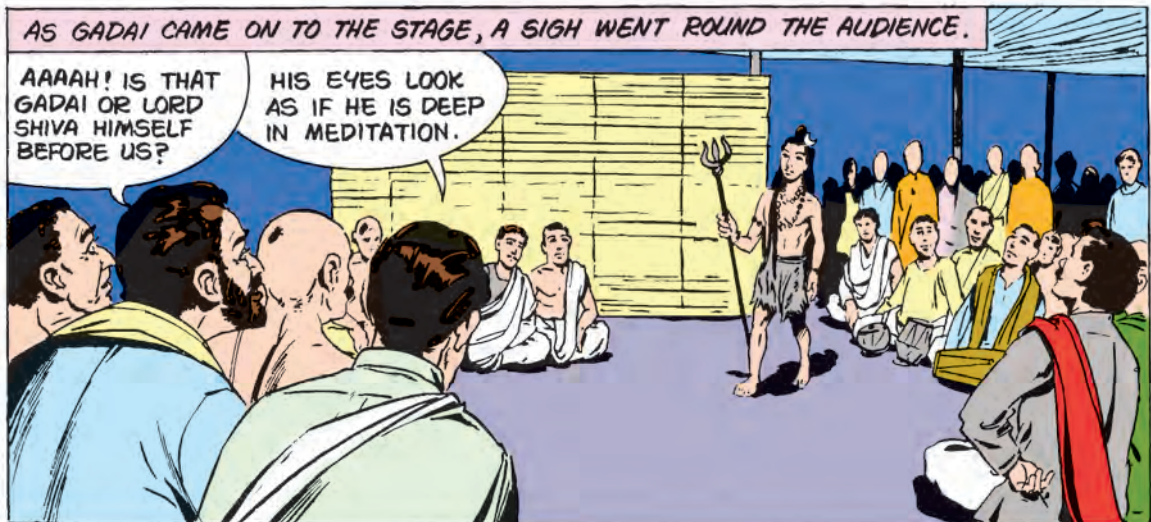
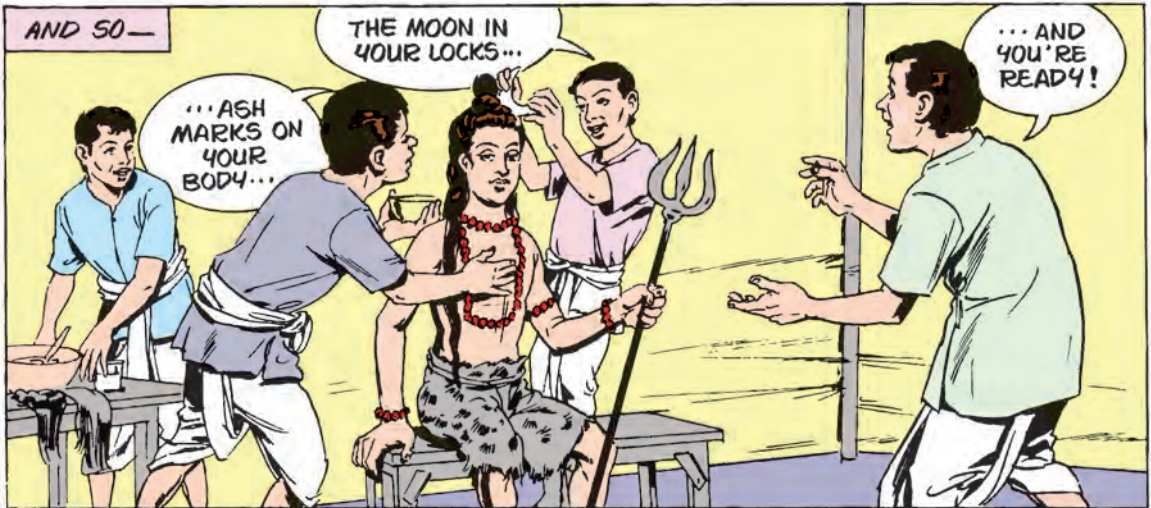


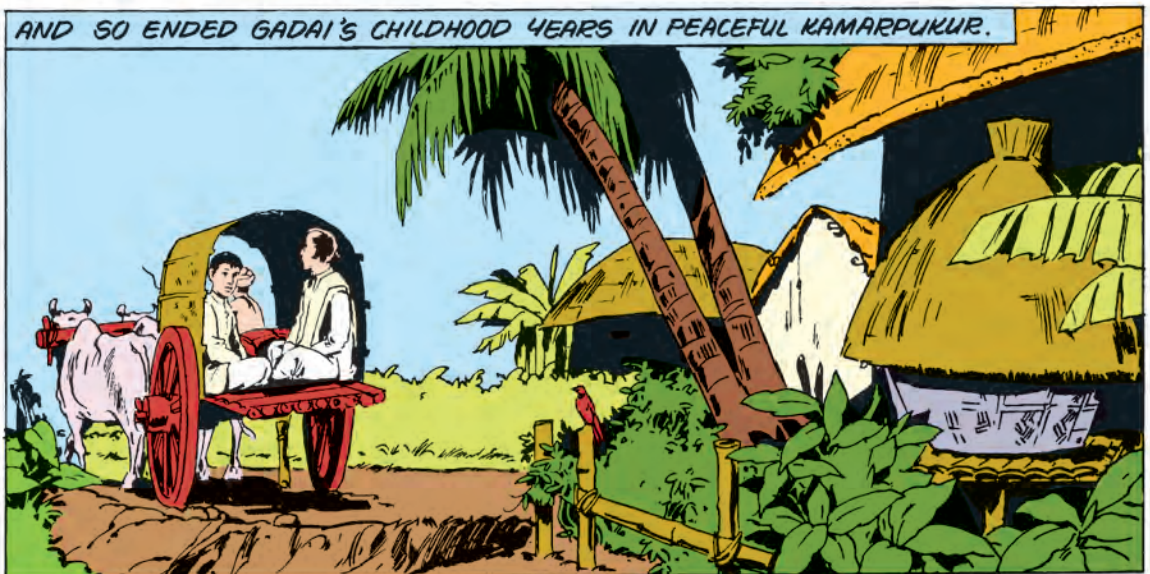
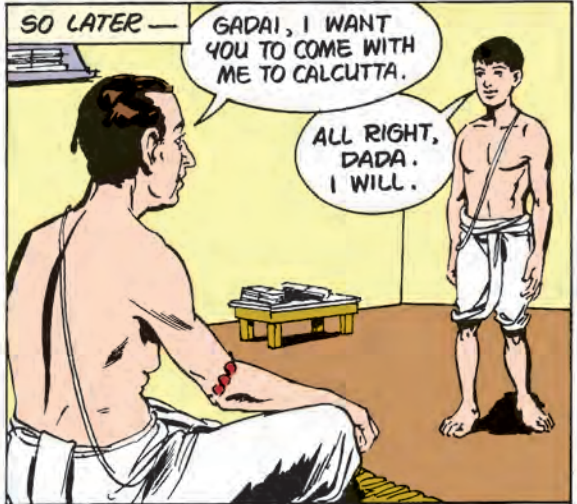
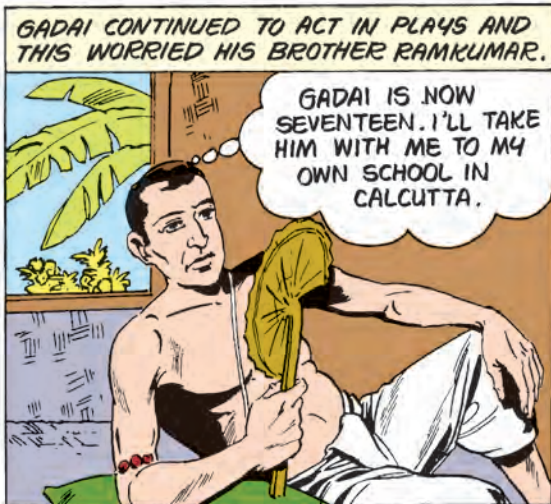
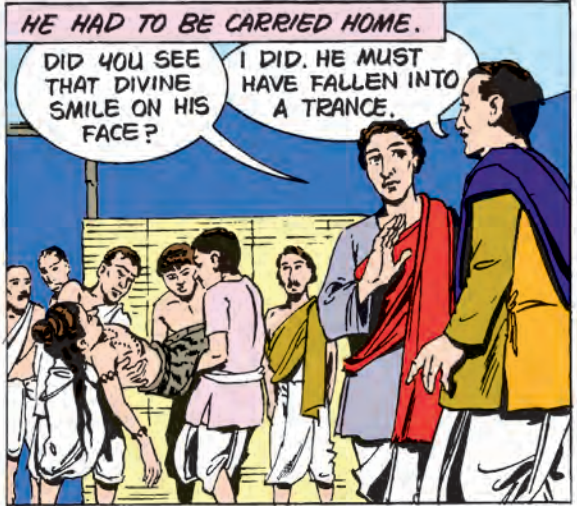
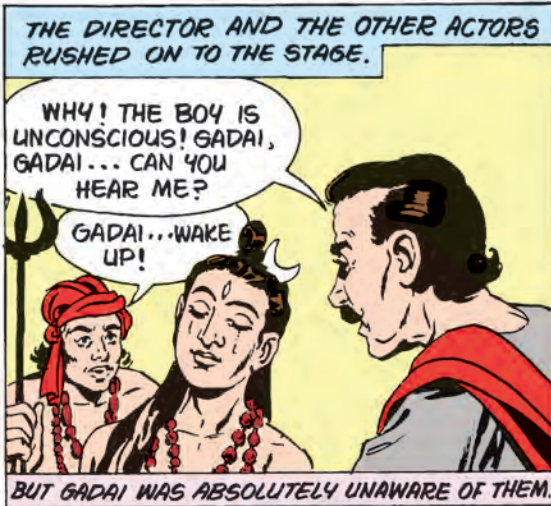
ONE DAY, AS HE WAS WALKING ALONG THE RIDGES OF THE FIELDS, EATING PARCHED RICE, A THUNDER-CLOUD DARKENED THE SKY. HE STOPPED TO GAZE AT IT.

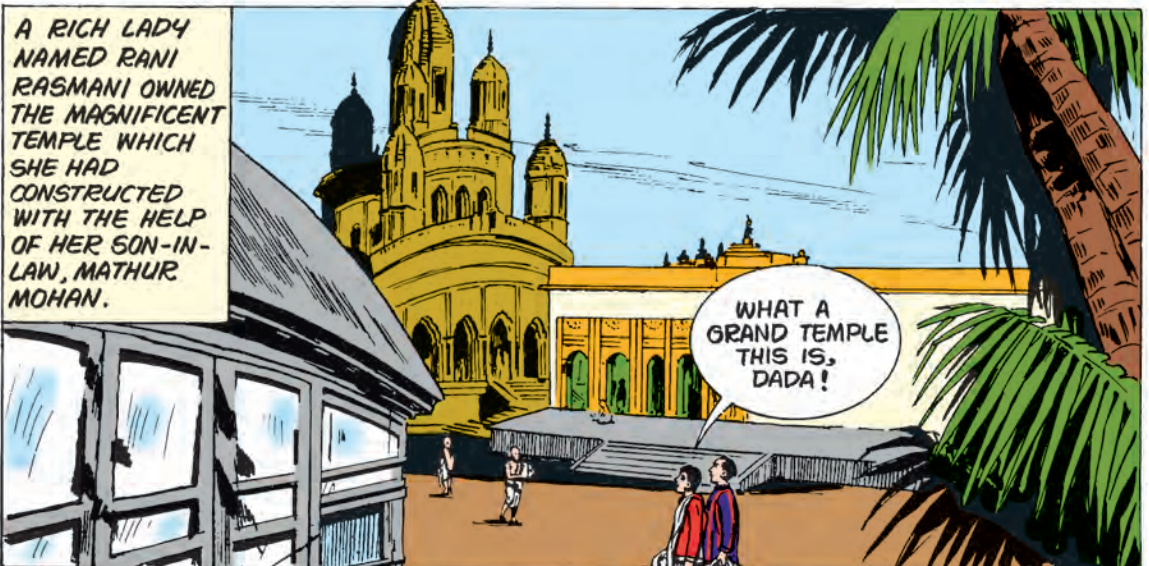
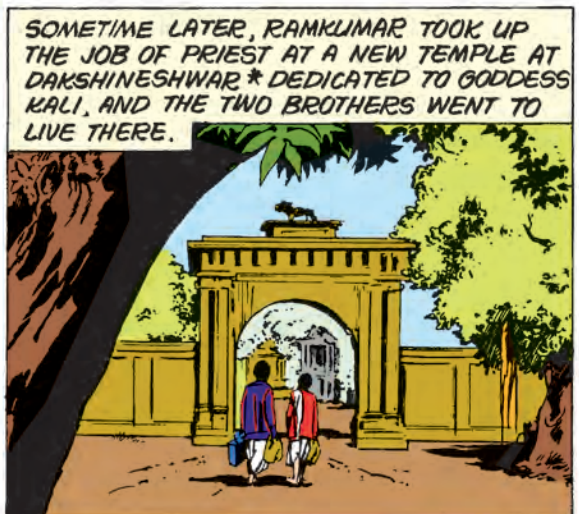
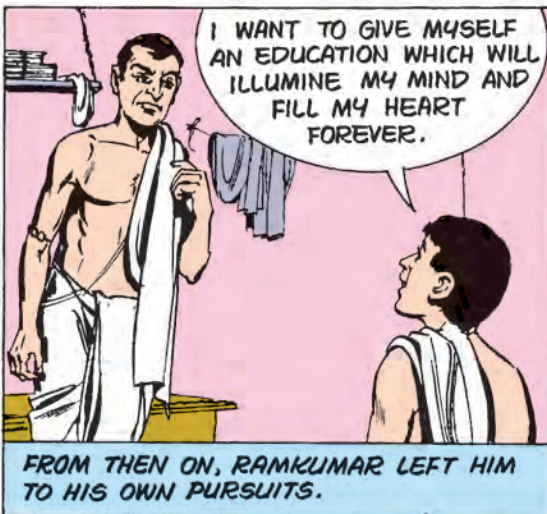
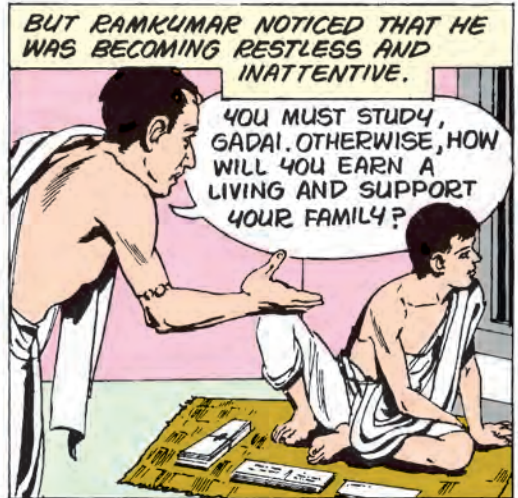
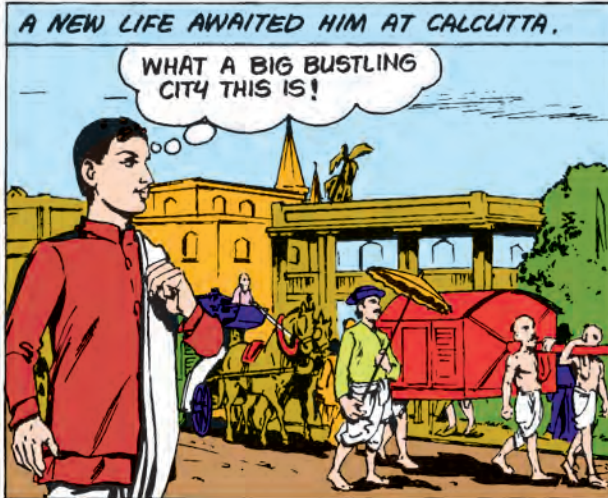




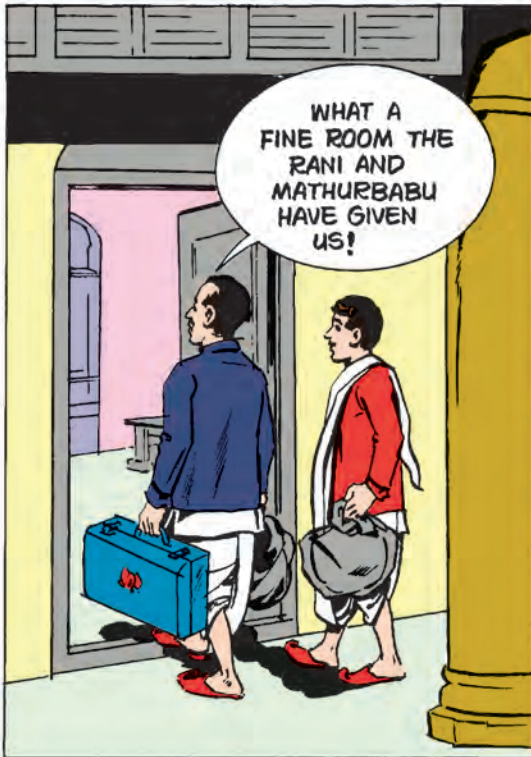




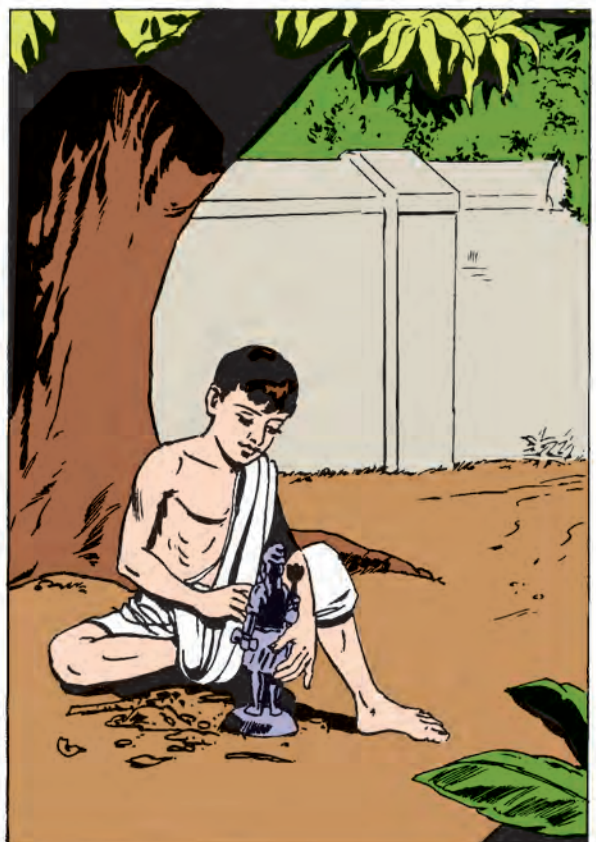




* FOUR MILES NORTH OF CALCUTTA



IF GADAI HAD BEEN RESTLESS BEFORE, NOW AT DAKSHINESHWAR, HE WAS HAPPY. HRIDAY RAM, GADAI'S NEPHEW, ALSO CAME TO STAY HERE.



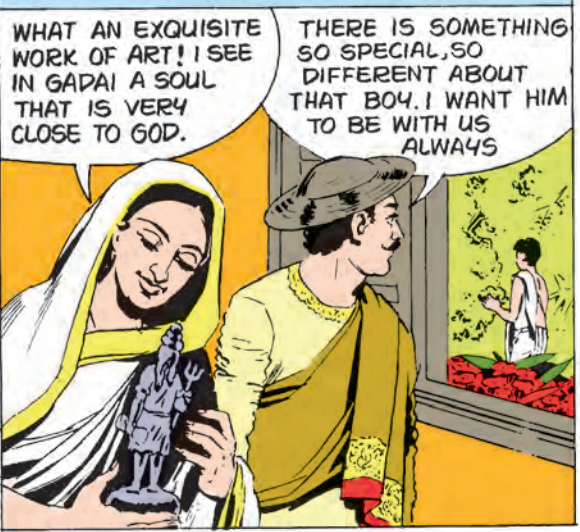
JUST THEN, MATHUR PASSED THAT WAY.



AH, GADAI! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL IMAGE! WHERE DID YOU GET IT?

I MADE IT MYSELF, MATHURBABU.

MATHUR TOOK THE IMAGE TO RANI RASMANI.



WHAT AN EXQUISITE WORK OF ART! I SEE IN GADAI A SOUL THAT IS VERY CLOSE TO GOD.

THERE IS SOMETHING SO SPECIAL, SO DIFFERENT ABOUT THAT BOY. I WANT HIM TO BE WITH US ALWAYS

SO MATHUR WENT TO SEE RAMKUMAR.



BABU, I WOULD LIKE GADAI TO BE A PRIEST HERE.

MATHURBABU, MY BROTHER IS A STRANGE PERSON. I WONDER IF HE WILL SETTLE DOWN TO ANY PERMANENT JOB.

GADAI LEARNT OF MATHUR'S INTEREST IN HIM FROM RAMKUMAR. BUT WHEN MATHUR TRIED TO APPROACH HIM —

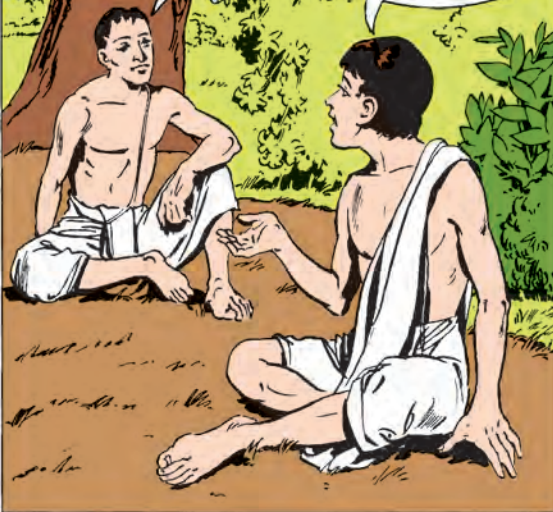
GADAI! GADAI, WAIT! I WANT TO ASK YOU... OH, HE'S GONE!



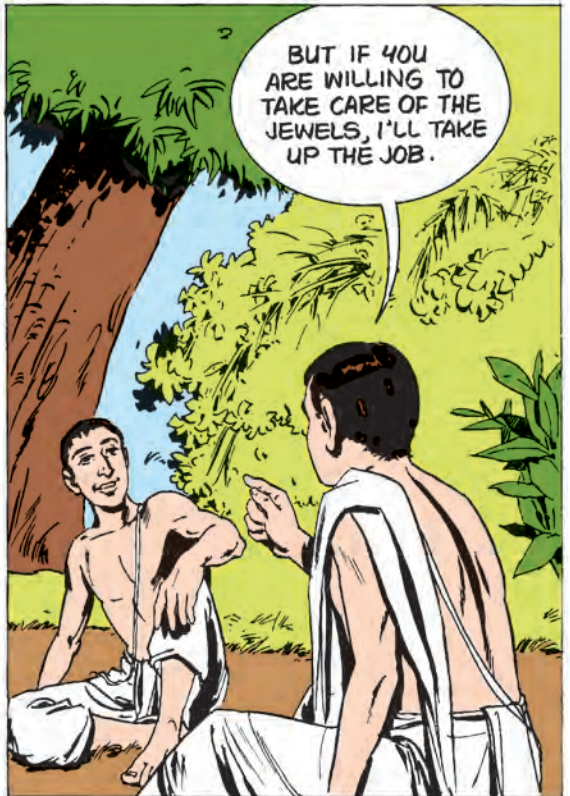
HRIDAY WAS SURPRISED AT GADAI'S BEHAVIOUR.

WHY DO YOU AVOID MATHUR? WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE A PRIEST? YOU ARE ALWAYS THINKING OF GOD, IN ANY CASE!

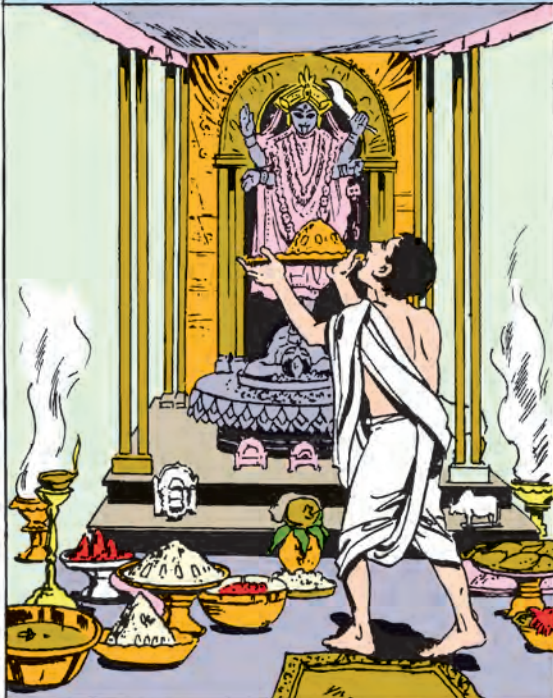
HRIDAY, IF I TAKE THE JOB, I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THE GODDESS'S JEWELS, I DON'T WANT THAT RESPONSIBILITY.



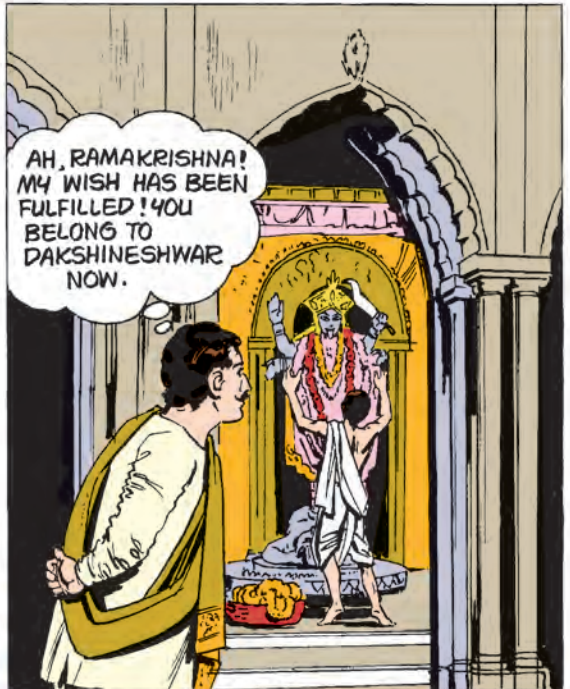
BUT IF YOU ARE WILLING TO TAKE CARE OF THE JEWELS, I'LL TAKE UP THE JOB.



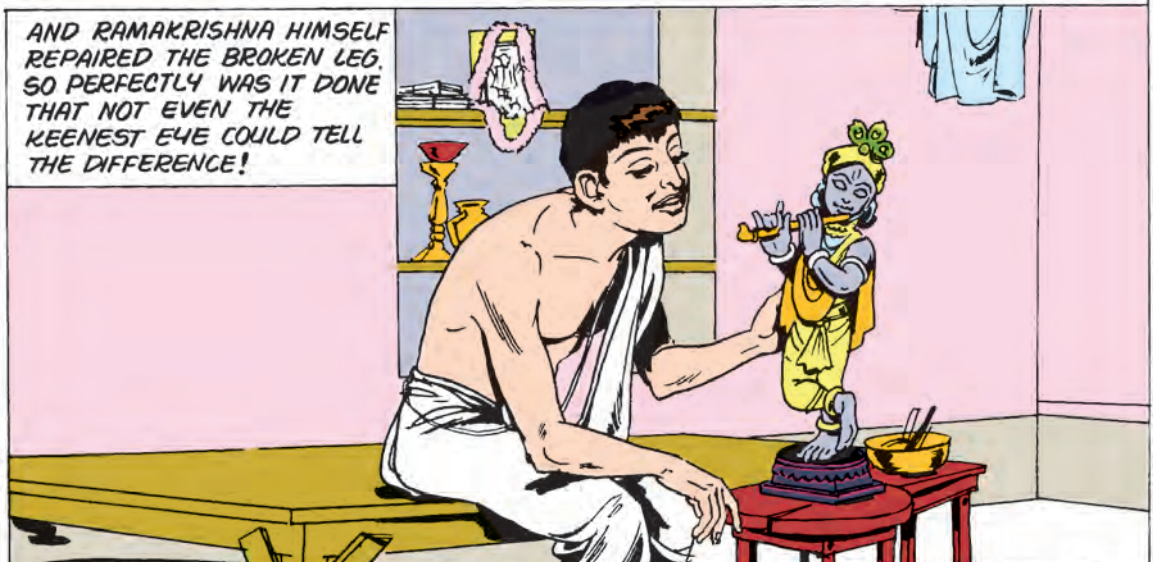
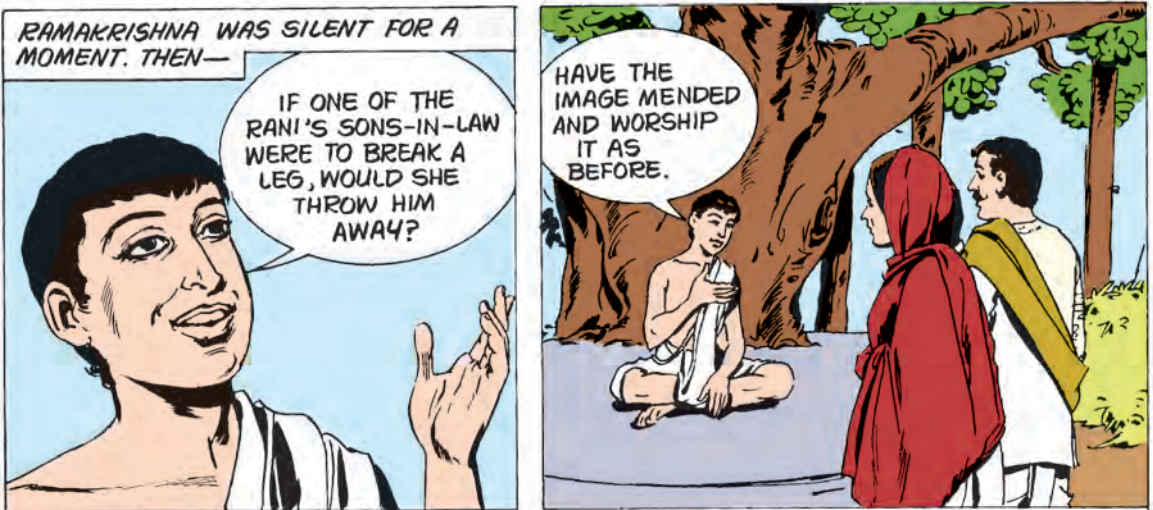
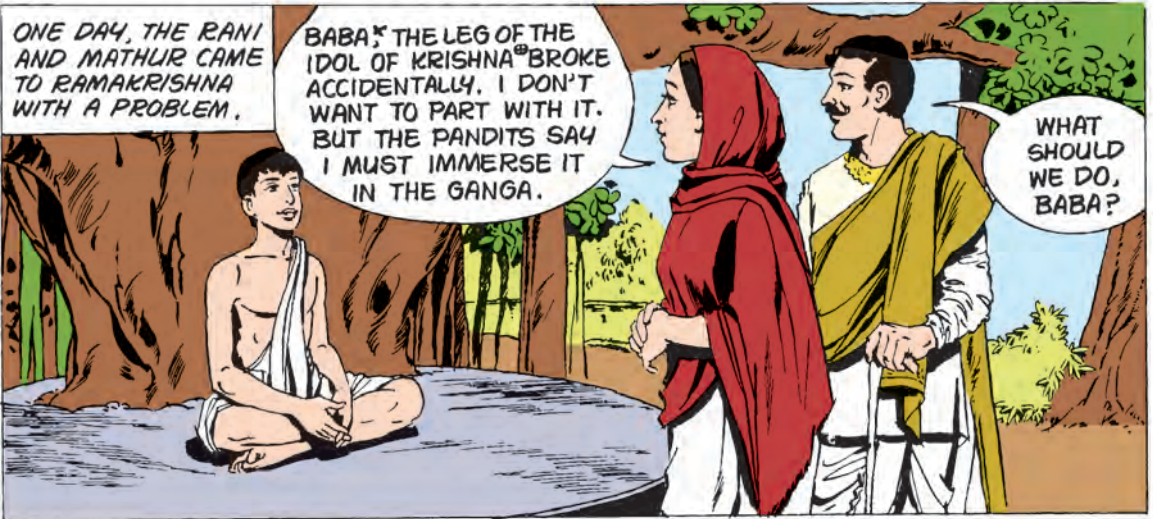
HRIDAY AGREED. SO GADAI BECAME ASSISTANT PRIEST OF THE KALI SHRINE UNDER RAMKUMAR AND BEGAN TO SERVE KALI WITH LOVE AND REVERENCE.



AH, RAMAKRISHNA! MY WISH HAS BEEN FULFILLED! YOU BELONG TO DAKSHINESHWAR NOW.



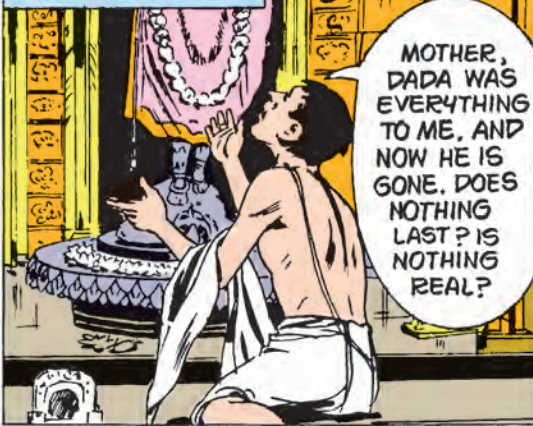
IT WAS AROUND THIS TIME THAT GADAI CAME TO BE CALLED RAMAKRISHNA. MATHUR IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE GIVEN HIM THIS NAME.



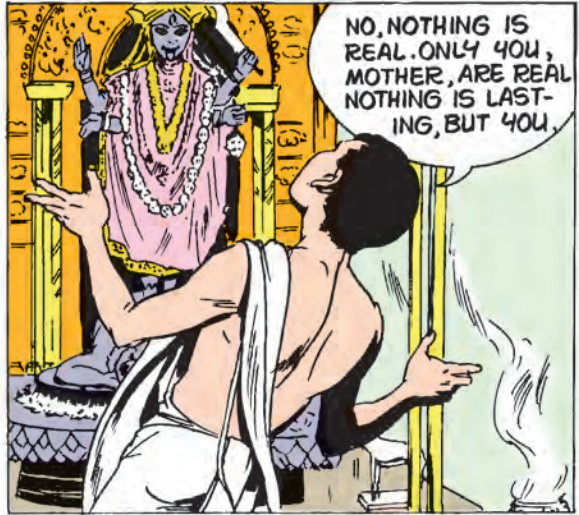
* LITERALLY FATHER —
A TERM OF RESPECT

⊗ THERE WAS A SHRINE OF KRISHNA TOO AT
DAKSHINESHWAR.

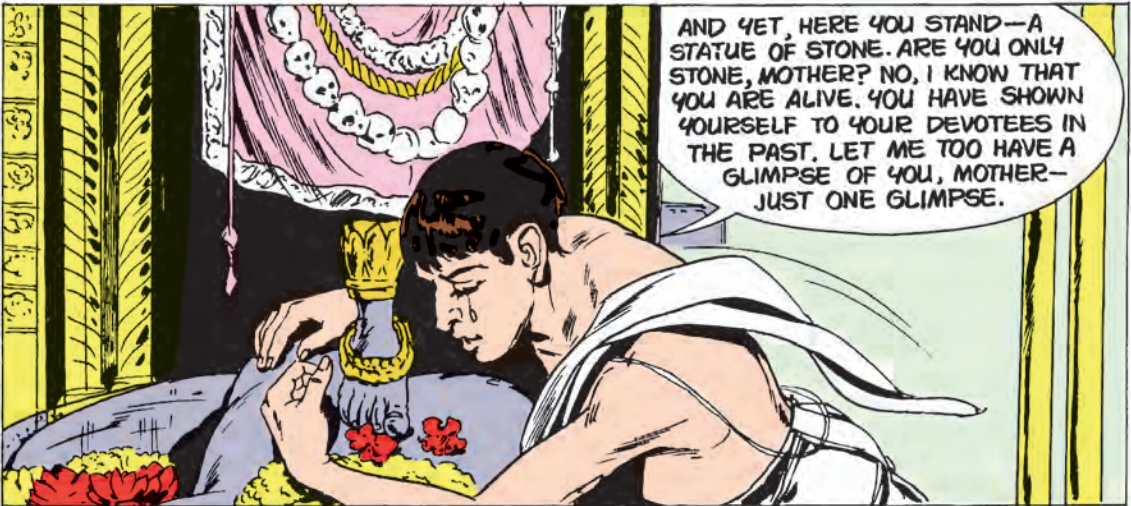
A FEW DAYS LATER RAMKUMAR DIED. THE BEREAVEMENT WAS A GREAT SHOCK TO RAMAKRISHNA.



MOTHER, DADA WAS EVERYTHING TO ME, AND NOW HE IS GONE. DOES NOTHING LAST? IS NOTHING REAL?



NO, NOTHING IS REAL. ONLY YOU, MOTHER, ARE REAL. NOTHING IS LASTING, BUT YOU.



AND YET, HERE YOU STAND—A STATUE OF STONE. ARE YOU ONLY STONE, MOTHER? NO, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE ALIVE. YOU HAVE SHOWN YOURSELF TO YOUR DEVOTEES IN THE PAST. LET ME TOO HAVE A GLIMPSE OF YOU, MOTHER—JUST ONE GLIMPSE.

AND RAMAKRISHNA FORGOT ABOUT EATING AND ABOUT SLEEPING. AS HE SAT PRAYING TO HIS BELOVED KALI, DAYS...



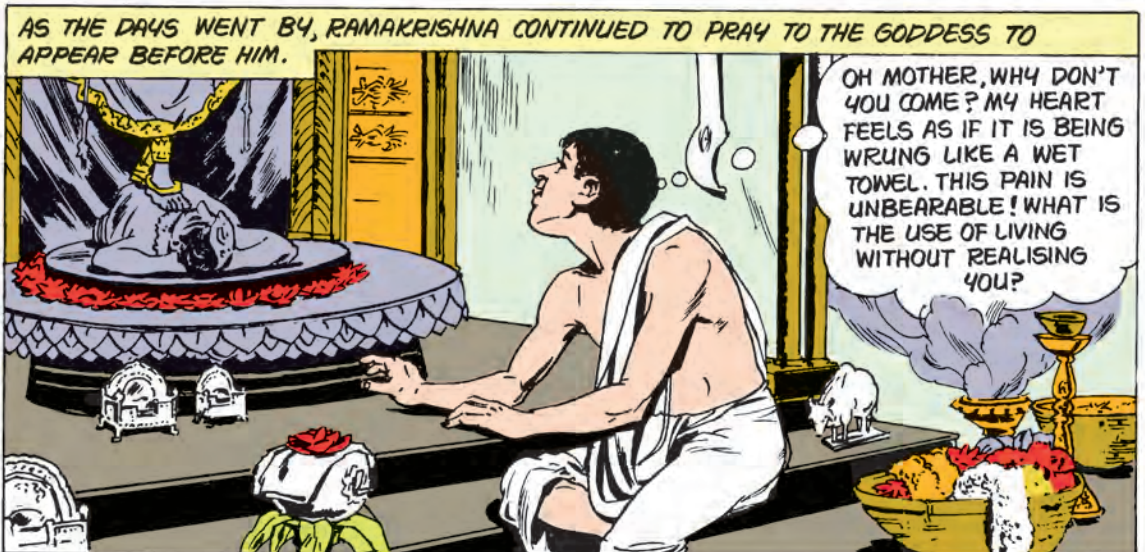
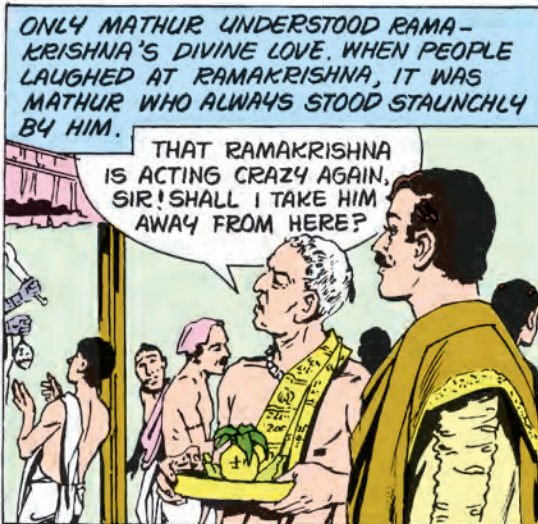
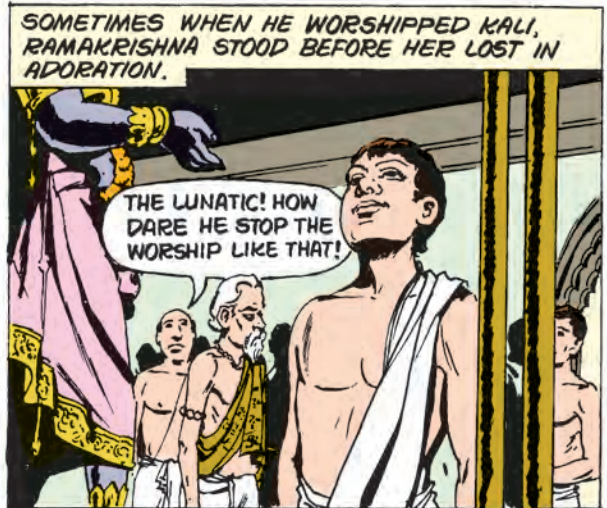
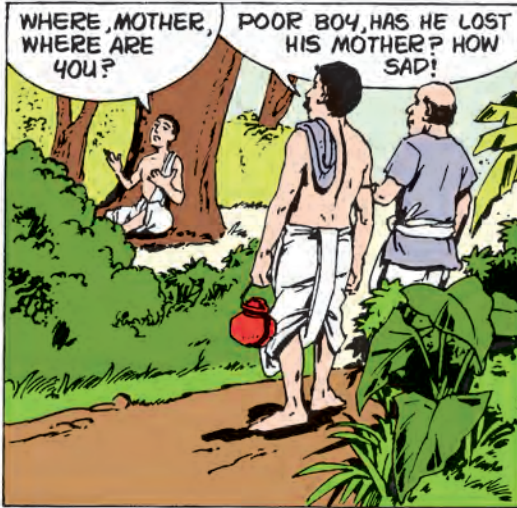
...AND NIGHTS WENT BY.

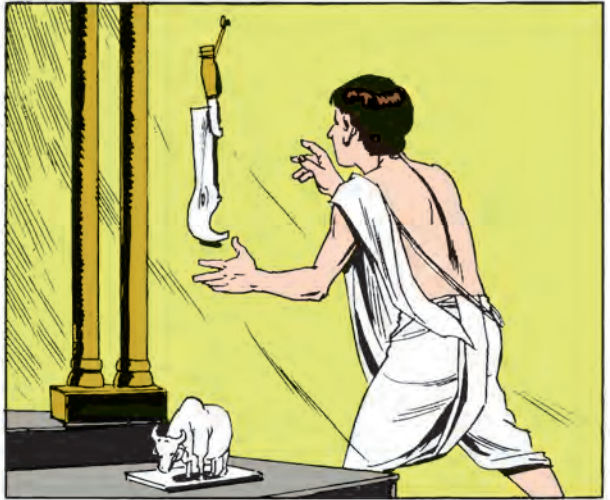
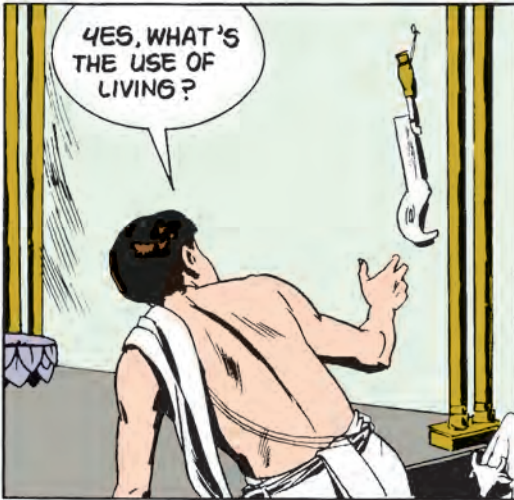


THEN ONE DAY—

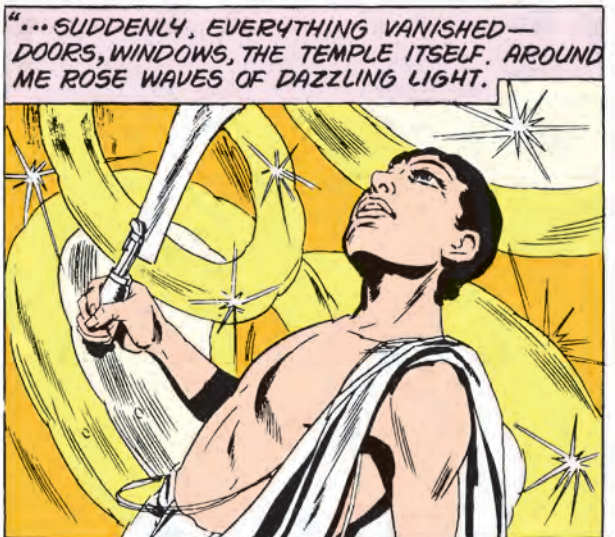


OH... IS IT EVENING? YES, THE TEMPLE BELLS ARE RINGING. ANOTHER DAY HAS GONE BY, MOTHER, AND I HAVE NOT SEEN YOU.

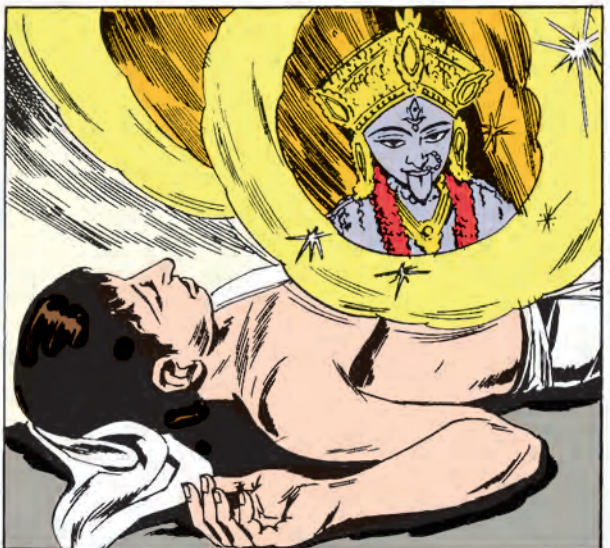


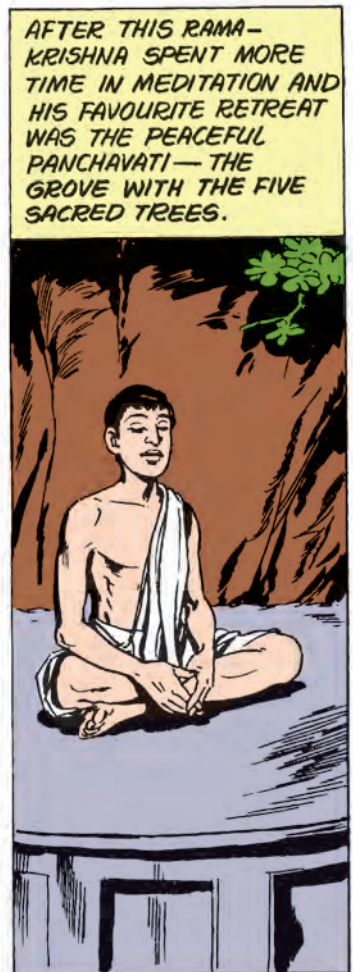


BEFORE RAMAKRISHNA COULD ACT ANY FURTHER, THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. AS HE HIMSELF WAS TO DESCRIBE IT LATER...



"THEY GREW AND GREW, AND THEN THIS GREAT OCEAN OF LIGHT FLOWED OVER ME, ENGULFING AND SUFFOCATING ME."

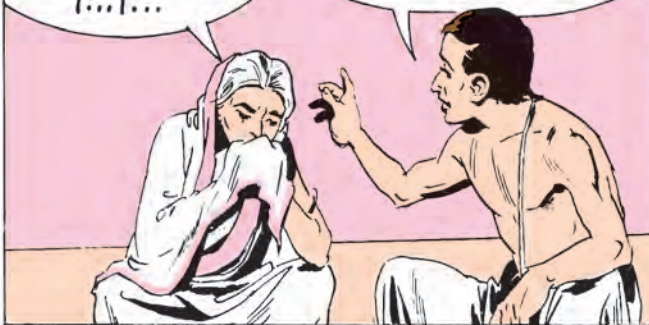




MEANWHILE, RUMOURS BEGAN TO REACH HIS MOTHER IN KAMARPUKUR.

RAMESHWAR, MY SON,
I... HEARD TODAY
THAT OUR GADAI IS
GOING MAD.
I...I...

DON'T CRY, MOTHER.
I'LL WRITE TO HIM TO COME
HERE. UNDER YOUR CARE,
HE'LL GET WELL SOON.



WHAT HAS HAPPENED
TO YOU, GADAI? I KNOW!
I'LL GET YOU MARRIED
THEN YOU WILL
NEVER BE ILL
AGAIN.



SOON, RAMAKRISHNA CAME TO KAMARPUKUR AND CHANDRA MARRIED HIM TO LITTLE SARADAMANI.



SARADA WAS ONLY FIVE YEARS OLD.*
AFTER THE WEDDING, SHE WENT BACK
TO HER FATHER'S HOUSE.

A YEAR AND A HALF LATER, RAMA-
KRISHNA BROUGHT HER BACK TO
KAMARPUKUR FOR A SHORT STAY.
HE WATCHED OVER HER
PROTECTIVELY AND FED HER
WITH HIS OWN HANDS.

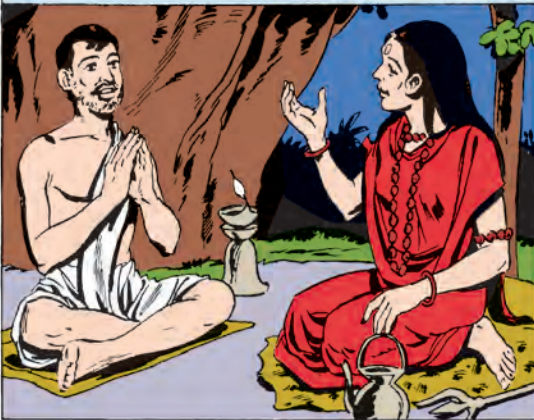


THEN SARADA RETURNED TO HER PARENTS' HOME
AND RAMAKRISHNA TO DAKSHINESHWAR.



* IN THOSE DAYS GIRLS WERE MARRIED AT A VERY YOUNG AGE.

AT DAKSHINESHWAR, TWO TEACHERS CAME TO RAMAKRISHNA; THE BHAIRAVI BRAHMANI, A LEARNED WANDERING NUN...



...AND TOTA PURI, A GREAT NAGA YOGI FROM THE PUNJAB.



SOON AFTER, RAMAKRISHNA ACCOMPANIED MATHUR ON A PILGRIMAGE. AT THE TOWN OF DEOGADH, WHEN RAMAKRISHNA SAW THE POVERTY OF THE VILLAGERS—



MATHUR BABU, MOTHER HAS GIVEN YOU SO MUCH WEALTH. LET'S FEED AND CLOTHE THESE PEOPLE.

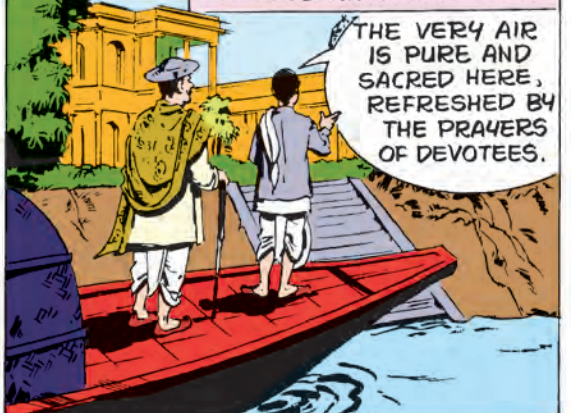
BUT...BUT, BABA, THIS PILGRIMAGE IS GOING TO COST ME A LOT. IF I SPEND SO MUCH ON THEM, I MIGHT HAVE NO MONEY LEFT!

I KNOW YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY, BABU. I'M NOT GOING WITH YOU. I'M STAYING HERE TO CARE FOR THESE PEOPLE.



BABA, PLEASE FORGIVE ME. I'LL DO AS YOU SAY.

FROM DEOGADH, THE PILGRIMS WENT ON TO VARANASI. RAMAKRISHNA WAS THRILLED AT THE SIGHT OF THE BEAUTIFUL TEMPLES OF THIS HALLOWED CITY.



THE VERY AIR IS PURE AND SACRED HERE, REFRESHED BY THE PRAYERS OF DEVOTEES.

AFTER MUCH TRAVELLING, THE PILGRIMS RETURNED TO DAKSHINESHWAR.

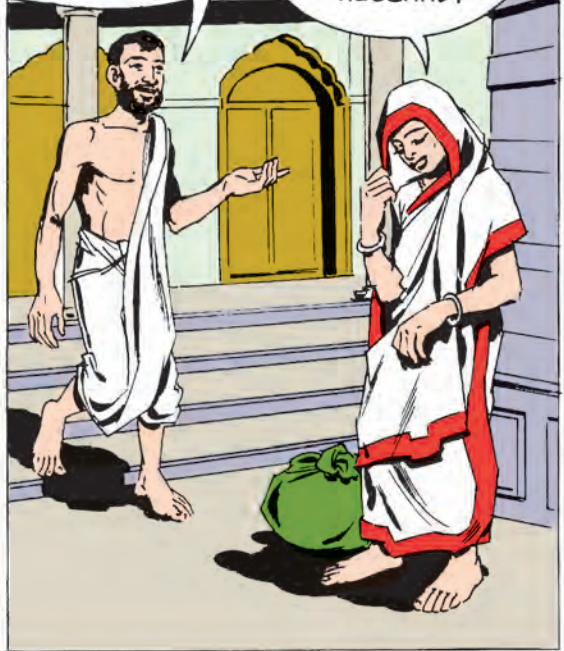
ALL THIS WHILE, LITTLE SARADAMANI WAS GROWING UP. SHE WAS NOW SEVENTEEN. SHE TOO HAD HEARD THE RUMOURS ABOUT RAMAKRISHNA.



ONE DAY, SHE SUDDENLY MADE UP HER MIND TO GO TO DAKSHINESHWAR.

SARADA—YOU! HOW GLAD I AM TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

I HAVE COME TO BE WITH YOU AND TO SERVE YOU, MY HUSBAND.

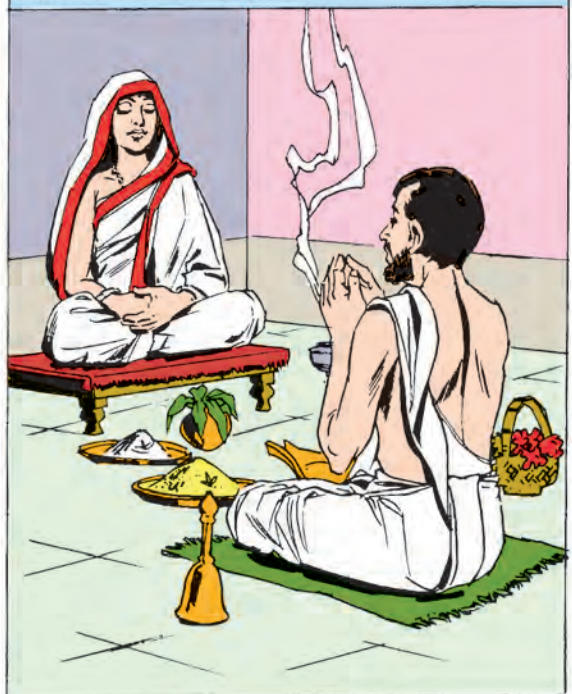


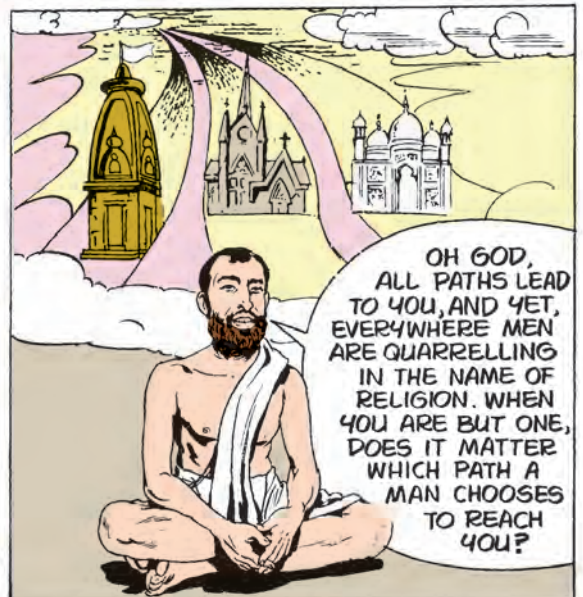
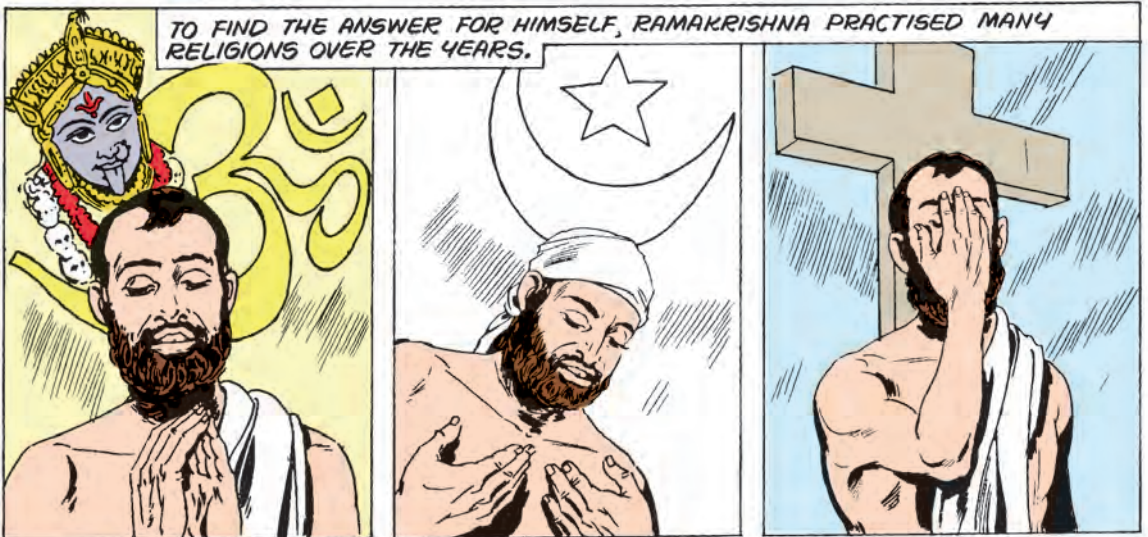
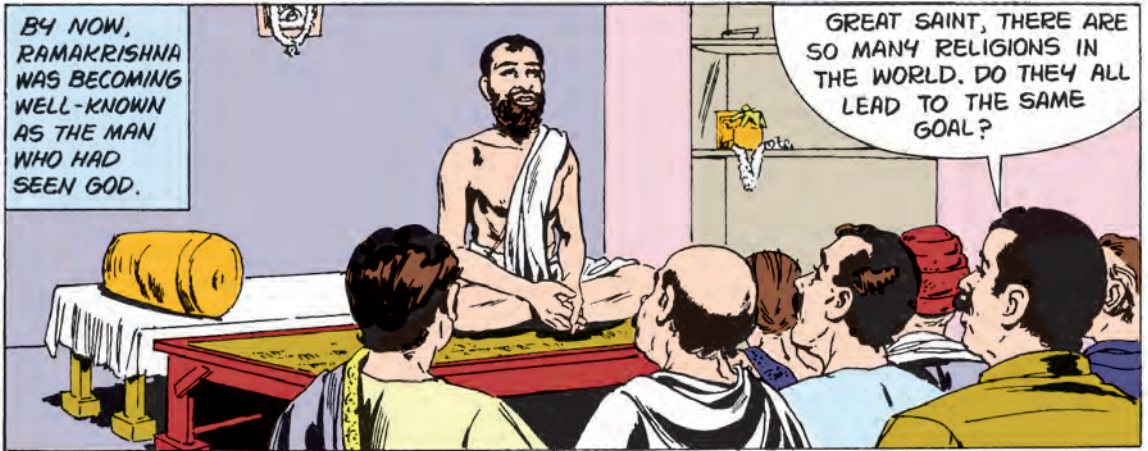
WHAT AM I TO YOU?

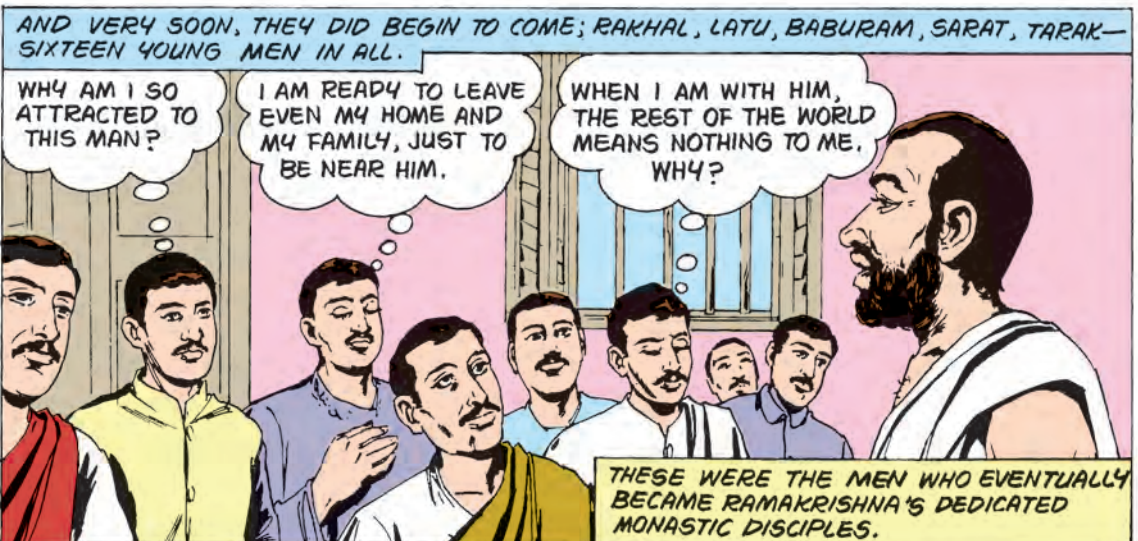
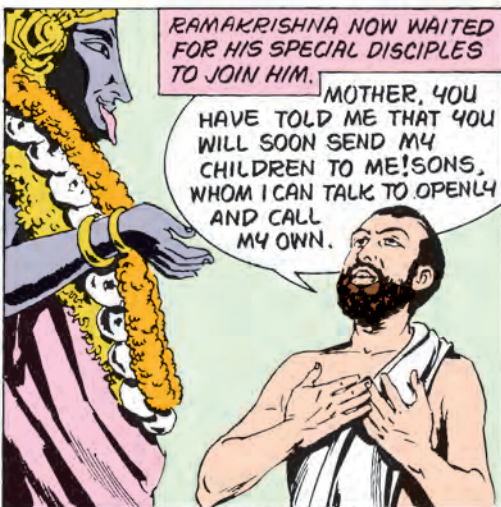
THE SAME MOTHER WHO IS IN THE TEMPLE, THE SAME MOTHER WHO GAVE BIRTH TO ME— THAT SAME MOTHER IS JUST NOW, PRESSING MY FEET. TO ME, YOU ARE THE DIVINE MOTHER HERSELF.



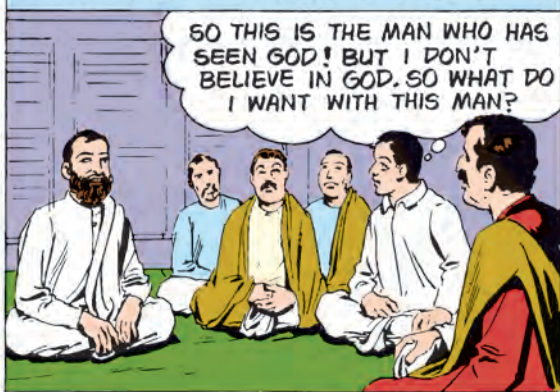
AND ONE DAY, RAMAKRISHNA PLACED SARADA ON A SEAT MEANT FOR THE GODDESS AND WORSHIPPED HER.



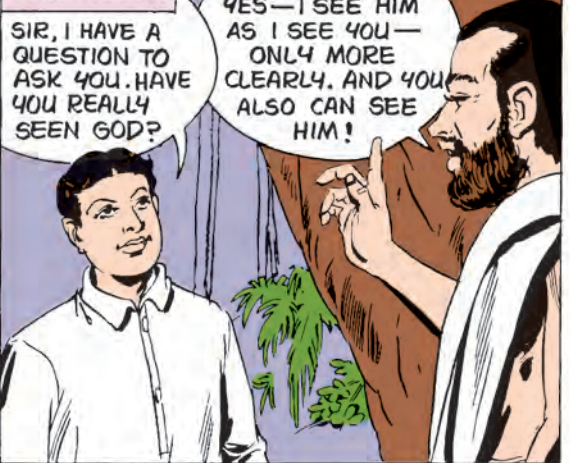




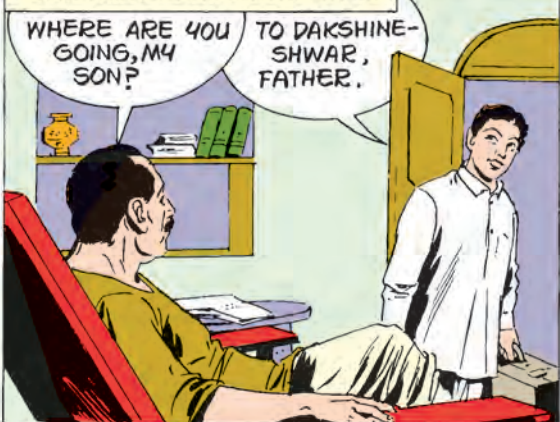
AND AMONG THEM WAS NAREN*, THE BOY WHO WOULD ONE DAY MAKE RAMAKRISHNA'S NAME KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WHEN NAREN FIRST MET RAMAKRISHNA, HE WAS A YOUNG MAN FACED WITH A DILEMMA.



THE DOUBTING NAREN, HOWEVER COULD NOT KEEP AWAY.



SLOWLY, THE SAME MAGNETISM THAT HAD ATTRACTED THE OTHER DISCIPLES BEGAN TO ATTRACT NAREN AS WELL.



TO SEE RAMAKRISHNA? AGAIN? SON, I HAVE GREAT PLANS FOR YOU. I DREAM OF SEEING YOU JOIN THE I.C.S. DO NOT LET YOUR GROWING AFFECTION FOR A SADHU SPOIL IT ALL.

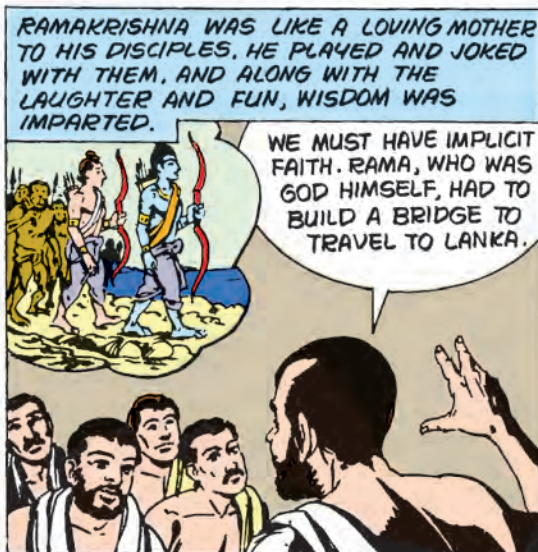
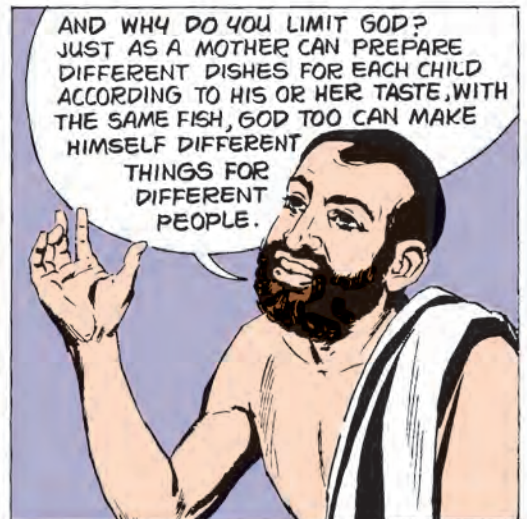
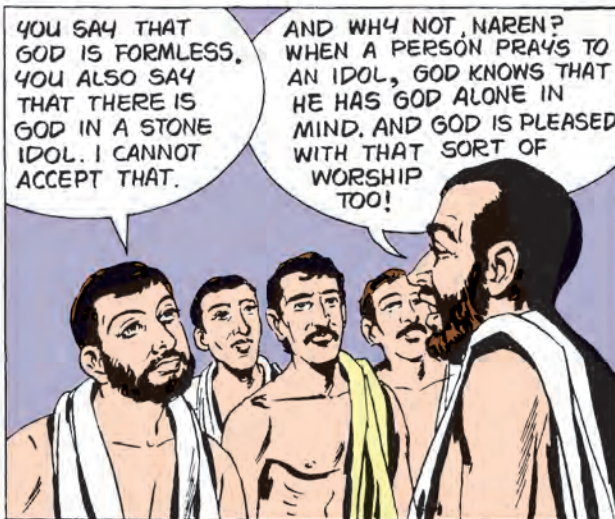
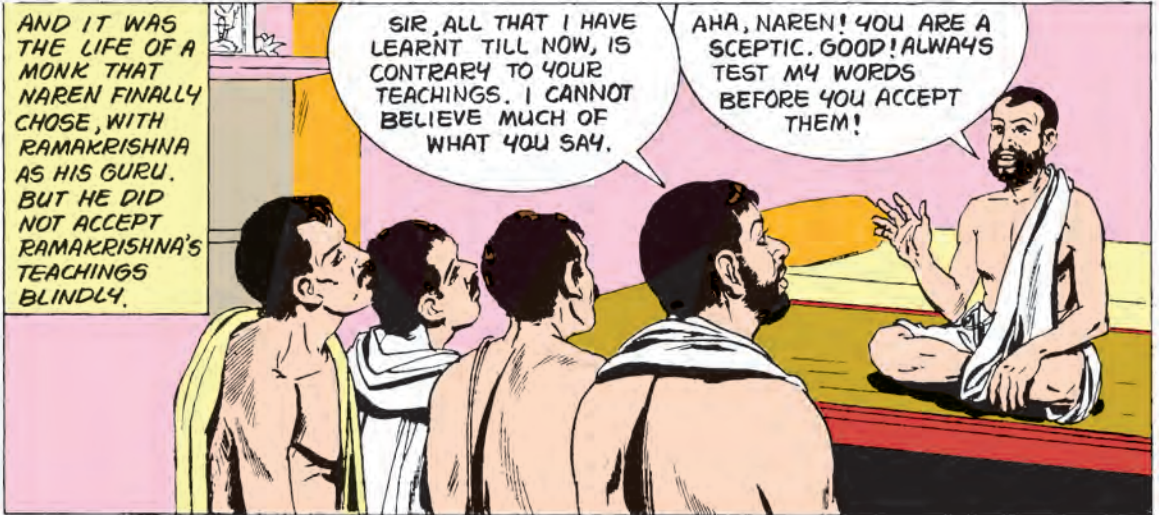


I USED TO HAVE TWO IDEALS BEFORE ME. ONE, OF BECOMING A RICH MAN SURROUNDED BY VAST WEALTH; THE OTHER OF BECOMING A WANDERING MONK.



NOW, SOMEHOW...





AND THE DISCIPLES TOO, RETURNED RAMAKRISHNA'S LOVE. ONE DAY, A DISCIPLE NAMED NIRANJAN WAS CROSSING THE RIVER GANGA IN A BOAT.

HAVE YOU SEEN THAT RAMAKRISHNA OF DAKSHINESHWAR? ANOTHER GOD-MAN WHOM PEOPLE ARE RUNNING AFTER!

THEY SAY HE EATS LIKE A WRESTLER. THAT'S ALL HE MUST BE CARING ABOUT!

LOOK HERE...



... HOW DARE YOU SPEAK LIKE THAT ! I AM HIS DISCIPLE AND I KNOW HIM BETTER THAN ANY OF YOU. HE IS A GOOD MAN! A GREAT MAN!

WHAT ELSE WOULD A DISCIPLE SAY ABOUT HIS GURU?

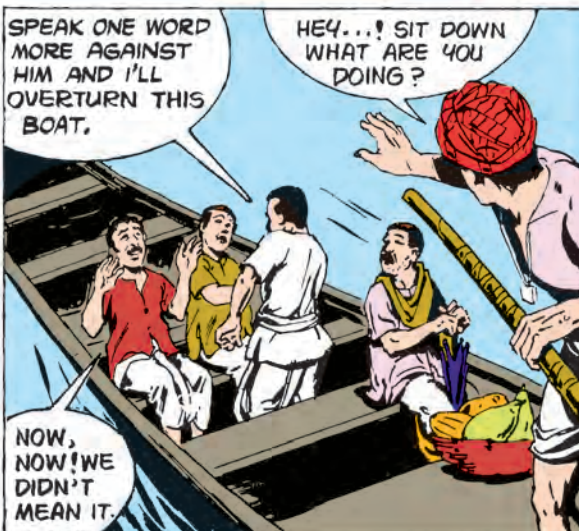
YOU ARE A FOOL TO ACCEPT ALL THAT MADMAN SAYS!



SPEAK ONE WORD MORE AGAINST HIM AND I'LL OVERTURN THIS BOAT.

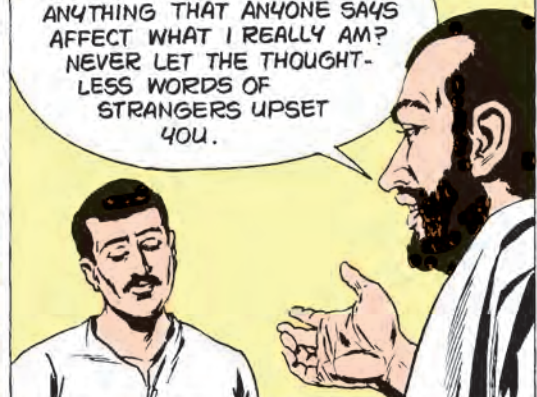
HEY...! SIT DOWN WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?

NOW, NOW! WE DIDN'T MEAN IT.

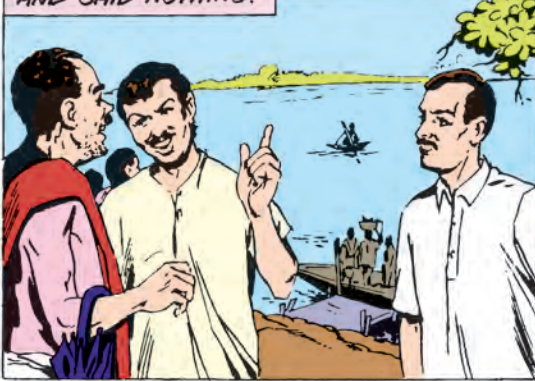


WHEN NIRANJAN TOLD RAMAKRISHNA WHAT HAD HAPPENED ON THE BOAT—

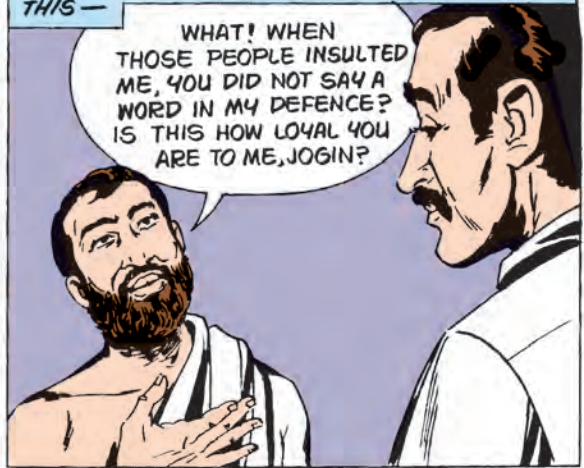
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO LOSE YOUR TEMPER LIKE THAT? CAN ANYTHING THAT ANYONE SAYS AFFECT WHAT I REALLY AM? NEVER LET THE THOUGHTLESS WORDS OF STRANGERS UPSET YOU.



ON ANOTHER OCCASION, SOME PEOPLE SPOKE AGAINST RAMAKRISHNA IN THE PRESENCE OF JOGIN, ANOTHER DISCIPLE. BUT JOGIN WAS A SHY, RETIRING BOY AND SAID NOTHING.



WHEN RAMAKRISHNA CAME TO KNOW OF THIS —



WHAT! WHEN THOSE PEOPLE INSULTED ME, YOU DID NOT SAY A WORD IN MY DEFENCE? IS THIS HOW LOYAL YOU ARE TO ME, JOGIN?

WHEN NIRANJAN HEARD OF THIS INCIDENT, HE WAS SURPRISED.

BUT THE MASTER TOLD ME SOMETHING QUITE DIFFERENT WHEN I BLEW UP THE OTHER DAY!

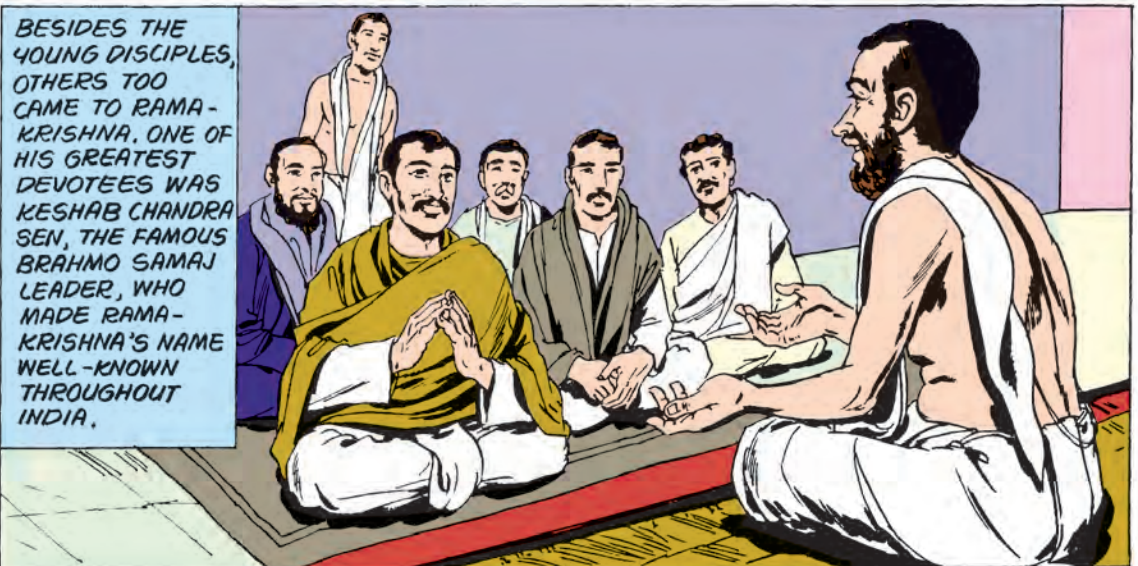
CAN'T YOU SEE? HE IS MOULDING OUR INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS.



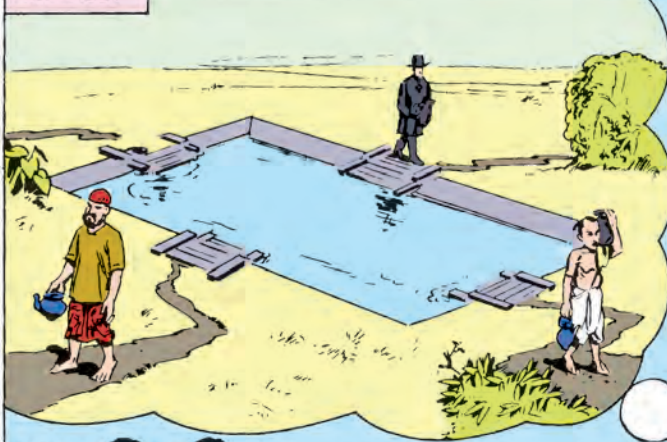
YOU ARE FIERY LIKE A RED CHILLI. HE WANTS TO CALM YOU DOWN. JOGIN IS LIKE A MOUSE — TOO TIMID AND EASILY BULLIED. HE WANTS TO PUT SOME SPIRIT INTO HIM.



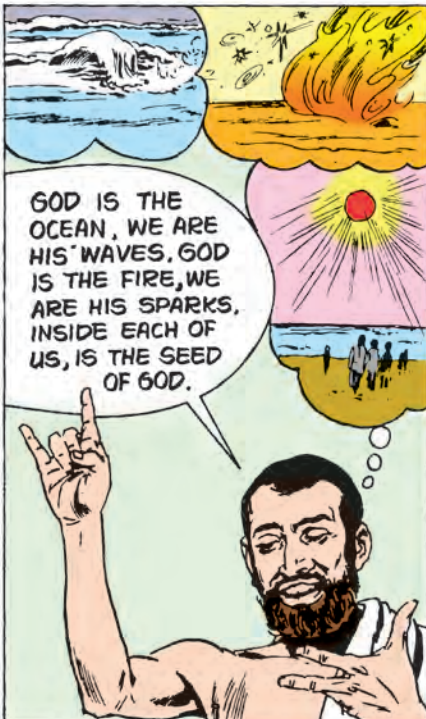
BESIDES THE YOUNG DISCIPLES, OTHERS TOO CAME TO RAMAKRISHNA. ONE OF HIS GREATEST DEVOTEES WAS KESHAB CHANDRA SEN, THE FAMOUS BRAHMO SAMAJ LEADER, WHO MADE RAMAKRISHNA'S NAME WELL-KNOWN THROUGHOUT INDIA.



THE WISDOM AND BEAUTY OF RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS TOUCHED THE HEARTS OF ALL.



A TANK HAS MANY GHATS. AT ONE, HINDUS DRAW WATER IN PITCHERS AND CALL IT 'JAL'; AT ANOTHER MUSSALMANS DRAW WATER IN LEATHER BOTTLES AND CALL IT 'PANI'; AT A THIRD ARE CHRISTIANS AND THEY CALL IT WATER. CAN WE SAY THAT THE THING DRAWN IS NOT 'JAL' BUT ONLY 'PANI' OR WATER? THE SUBSTANCE IS ONE, ONLY THE NAMES VARY.

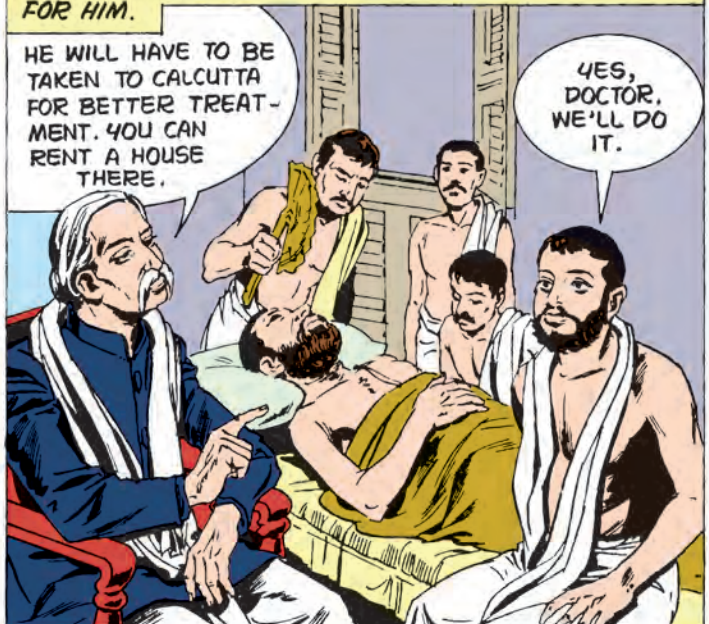


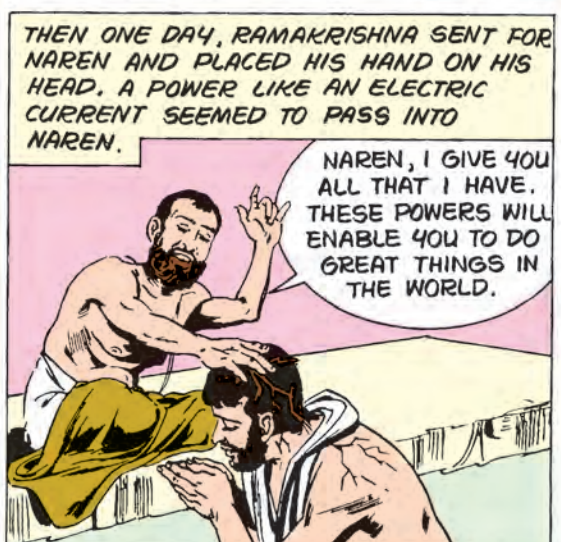
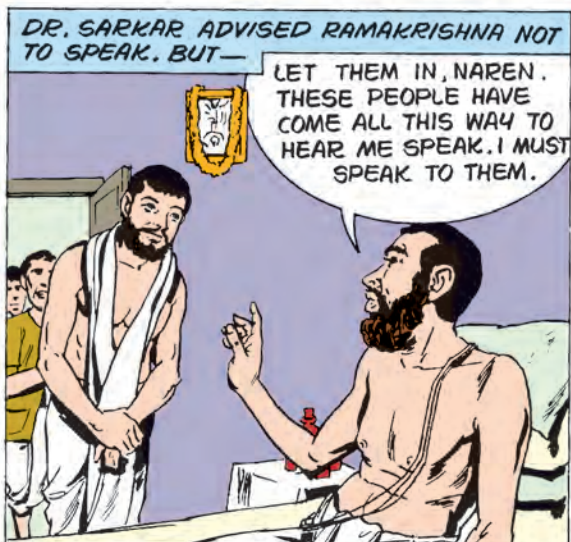
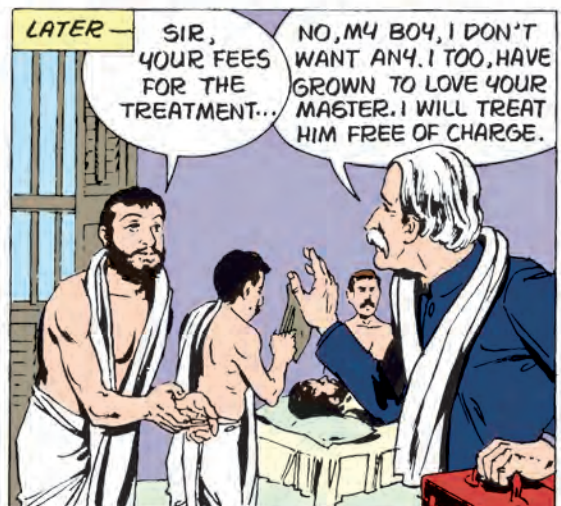
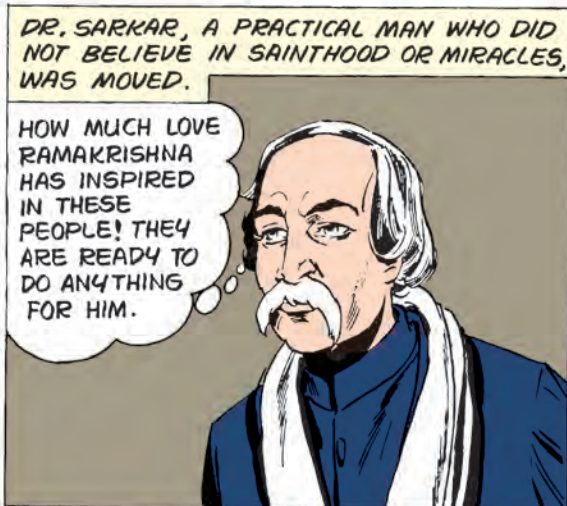
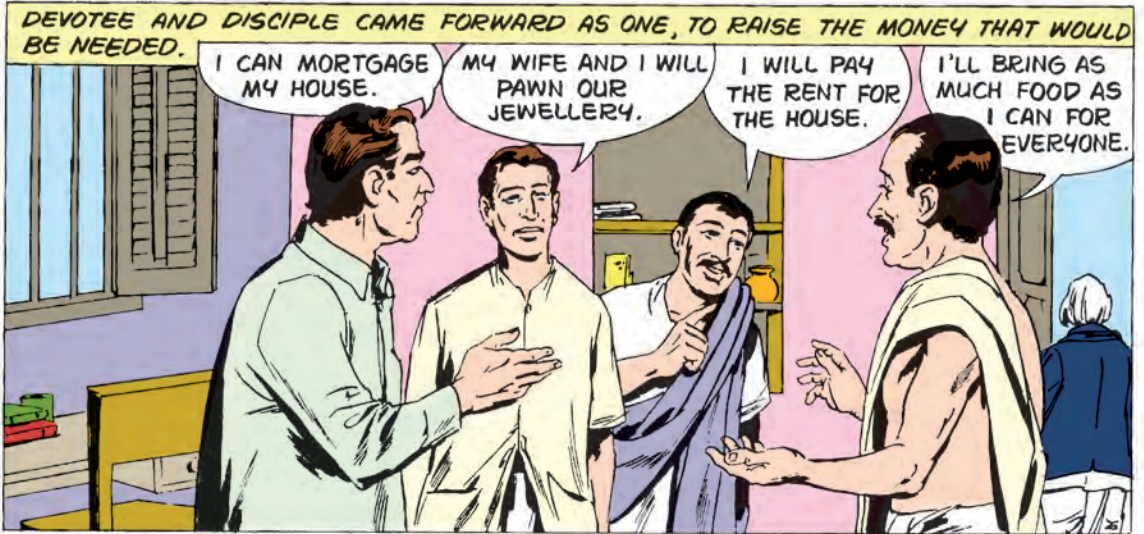
GOD IS THE OCEAN, WE ARE HIS WAVES. GOD IS THE FIRE, WE ARE HIS SPARKS. INSIDE EACH OF US, IS THE SEED OF GOD.

AND THEN ONE DAY, RAMAKRISHNA FELL ILL WITH A FATAL PAIN IN HIS THROAT. A WELL-KNOWN PHYSICIAN, DR. MAHENDRALAL SARKAR, WAS ENGAGED FOR HIM.

HE WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN TO CALCUTTA FOR BETTER TREATMENT. YOU CAN RENT A HOUSE THERE.

YES, DOCTOR, WE'LL DO IT.





NOT LONG AFTER THAT, ONE DAY, IN
EARLY AUGUST—

JOGIN, CALL OUT
THE DATES OF
THE MONTH
OF AUGUST.

YES,
MASTER.

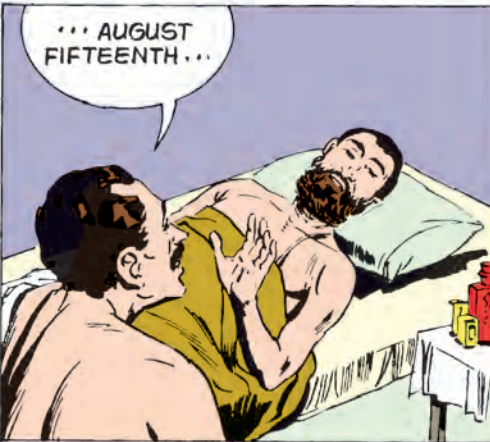


JOGIN BEGAN.

... AUGUST TWELFTH,
AUGUST THIRTEENTH,
AUGUST
FOURTEENTH...



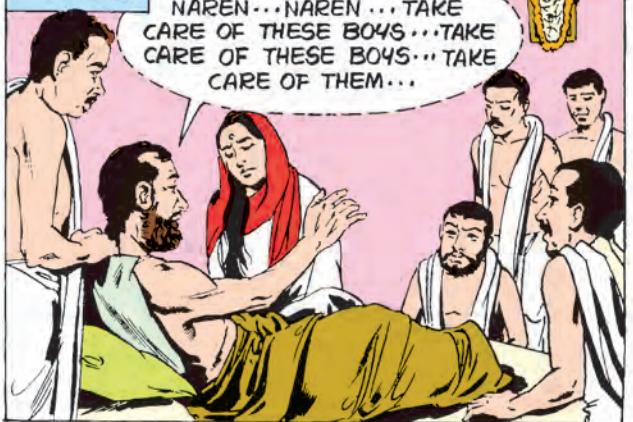
... AUGUST
FIFTEENTH...



AT THAT POINT, RAMAKRISHNA
STOPPED HIM WITH A SIGN.

ON THE FIFTEENTH OF AUGUST 1886, SARADA
DEVI AND THE DISCIPLES STOOD ROUND
THE BED.

NAREN...NAREN... TAKE
CARE OF THESE BOYS... TAKE
CARE OF THESE BOYS... TAKE
CARE OF THEM...



AND THEN RAMAKRISHNA CALLED
OUT IN A RINGING VOICE THAT HIS
THROAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN
INCAPABLE OF PRODUCING.

KALI! KALI! KALI!



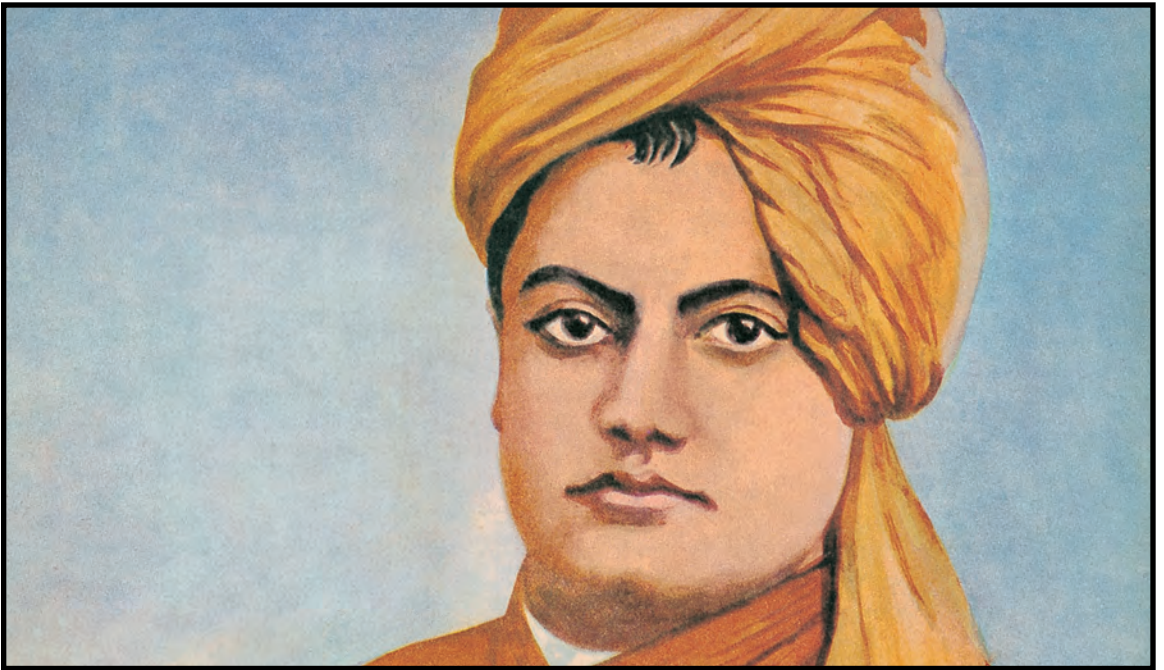
AND SLOWLY, HE FELL INTO A COMA. EVERYONE
WAITED FOR HIM TO COME BACK TO CONSCIOUS-
NESS, BUT HE DID NOT RETURN.



AS RAMAKRISHNA HIMSELF ONCE PUT IT, HE
HAD CROSSED FROM ONE ROOM INTO ANOTHER.

VIVEKANANDA

HE KINDLED THE SPIRIT OF MODERN INDIA



VIVEKANANDA



NINETEENTH CENTURY INDIA. THE SPIRIT OF HINDUISM LAY HIDDEN UNDER A DEBRIS OF RITUALS — RITUALS DISOWNED BY THE INDIAN INTELLECTUALS AND SCORNFUL BY THE RULING BRITISH. AT SUCH A TIME WAS BORN TO VISHWANATH DATTA AND BHUVANESHWARI OF CALCUTTA, A SON WHOM THEY NAMED NARENDRANATH.

AS A BOY, NARENDRANATH WAS STRONG-WILLED BUT RESTLESS. ONE DAY —



BILEY WAS NARENDRANATH'S PET-NAME.



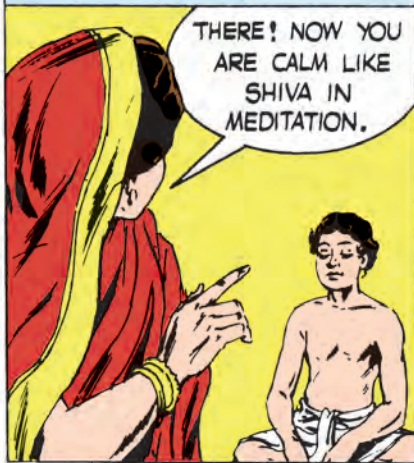
WHEN THE DOLL WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM —



BUT HIS MOTHER KNEW OF A WAY TO CONTROL HIM.



THE MAGIC OF THE NAME IMMEDIATELY QUIETENED NARENDRANATH.



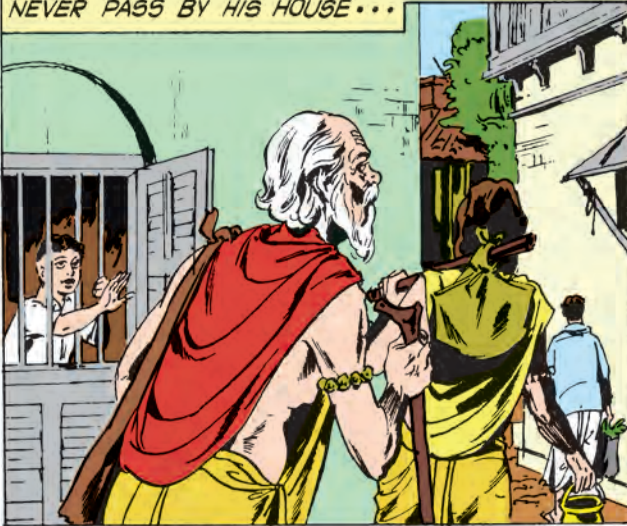
NARENDRANATH WAS A BORN LEADER, NOT ONLY TO HIS TWO BROTHERS AND TWO SISTERS, BUT TO ALL THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHILDREN.



A KING NEEDS REVENUE. YOU BRING ME SWEETS. YOU...BRING ME MARBLES...



THOUGH HE LOVED TO PLAY KING, WHAT FASCINATED HIM MOST WERE THE SANYASIS* IN THEIR SAFFRON ROBES. THESE WANDERING MONKS COULD NEVER PASS BY HIS HOUSE...



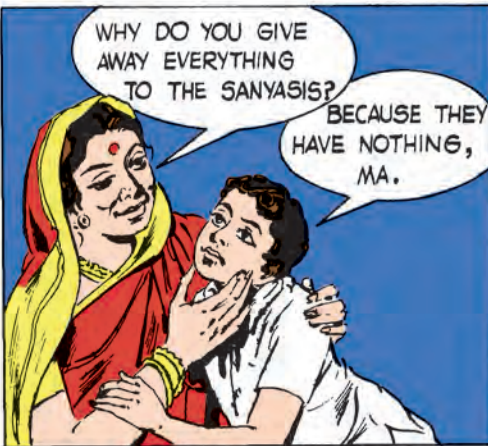
... WITHOUT RECEIVING EVERYTHING THAT WAS WITHIN HIS REACH.

GOD BLESS YOU, CHILD.



WHY DO YOU GIVE AWAY EVERYTHING TO THE SANYASIS?

BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOTHING, MA.



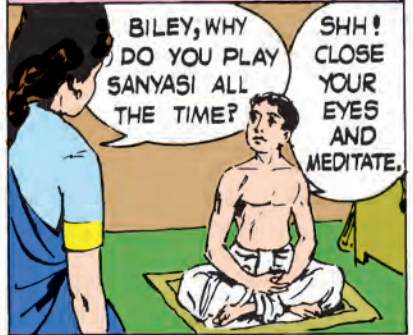
I TOO SHALL BE A SANYASI



AND HE WOULD GO AND SIT CROSSLEGGED IN SOME QUIET CORNER OF THE HOUSE.

BILEY, WHY DO YOU PLAY SANYASI ALL THE TIME?

SHH! CLOSE YOUR EYES AND MEDITATE.



ONE DAY, WHILE NAREN WAS AT THIS GAME —

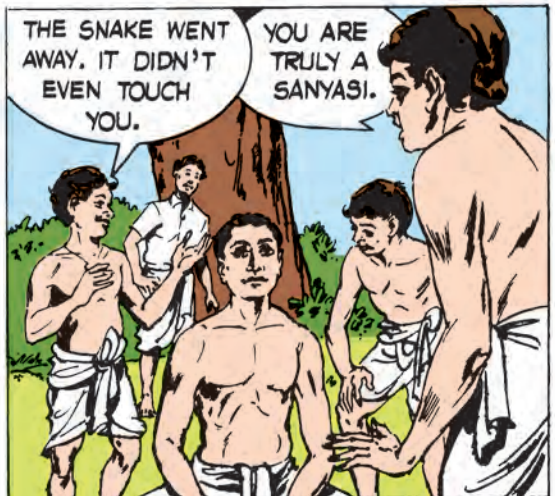
BILEY, RUN!



BUT NAREN SAT WHERE HE WAS.

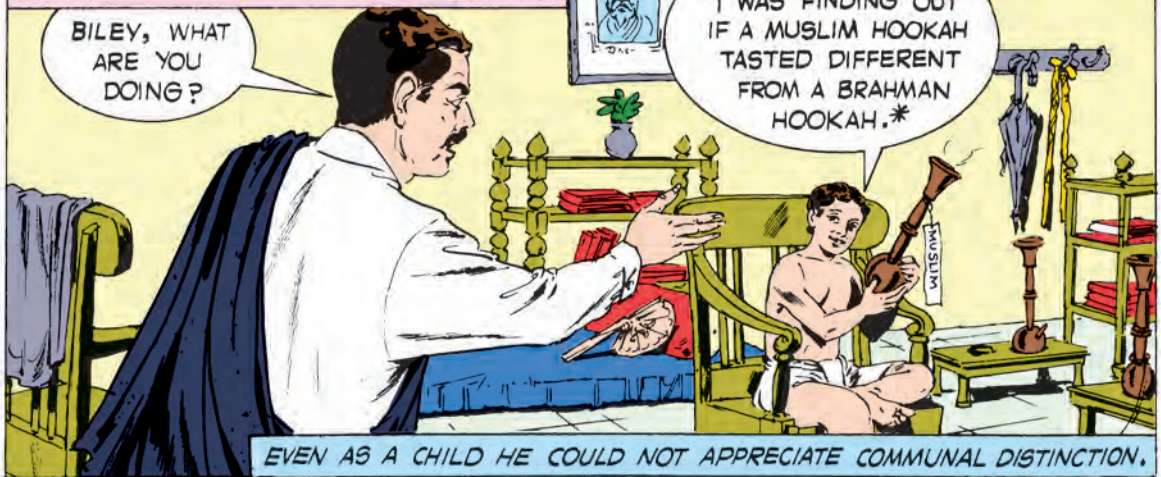
THE SNAKE WENT AWAY. IT DIDN'T EVEN TOUCH YOU.

YOU ARE TRULY A SANYASI.

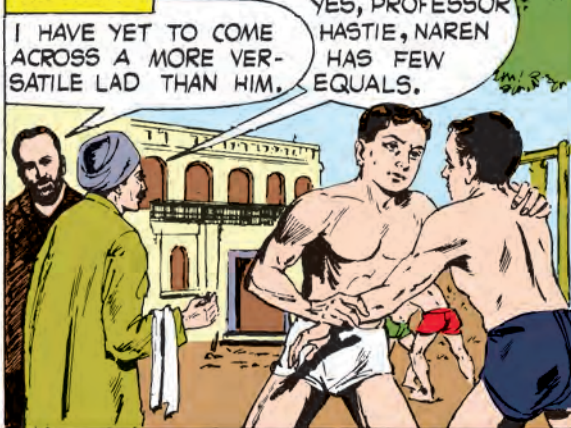


* WANDERING MONK.

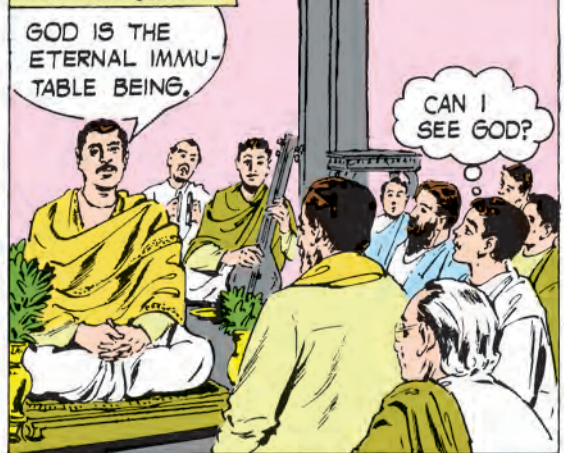
FORTHRIGHT LIKE MANY CHILDREN, NAREN WAS BOLD TOO. ONE DAY, HIS FATHER WAS SHOCKED TO FIND HIM NEAR HIS HOOKAHS.



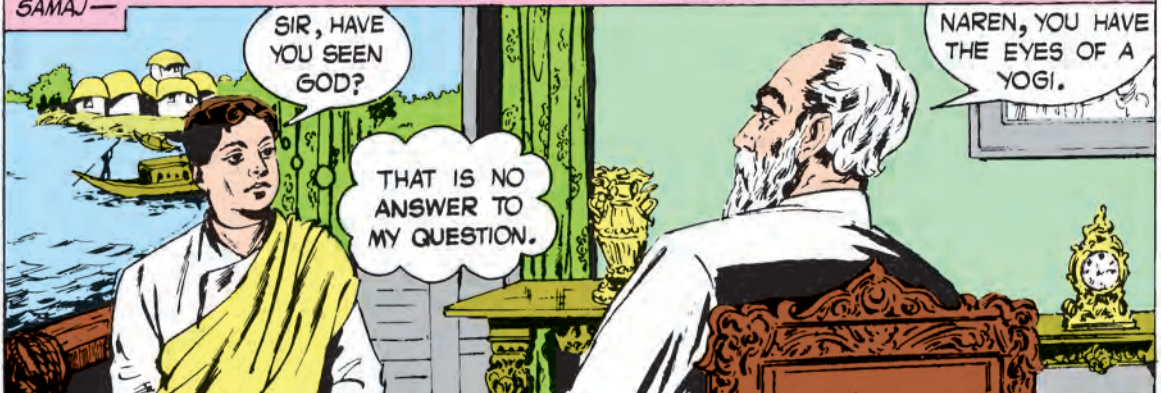
AS THE BOY GREW UP, HE TOOK CARE TO DEVELOP HIS BODY AND HIS MIND. HIS PERSONALITY STOOD OUT IN SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.



NAREN'S ENQUIRING MIND SOON REJECTED IDOLS AND LED HIM TO THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.*

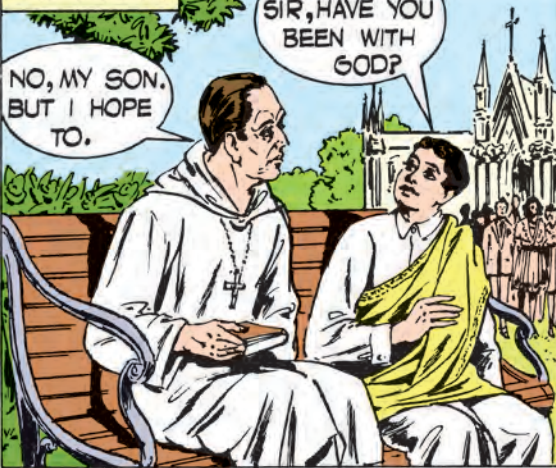


SOON, HE WAS BURNING WITH THE DESIRE TO KNOW AND EXPERIENCE GOD. ONE DAY, WHILE HE WAS ALONE WITH DEVENDRANATH TAGORE, THE LEADER OF THE BRAHMO SAMAJ—

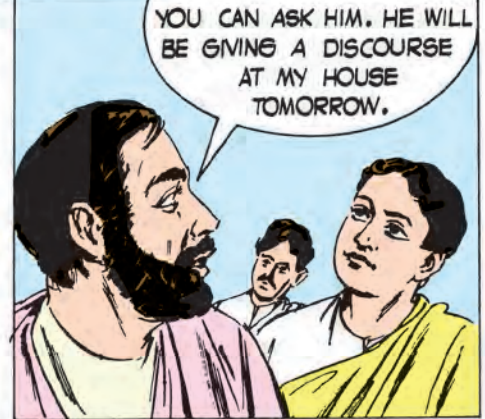
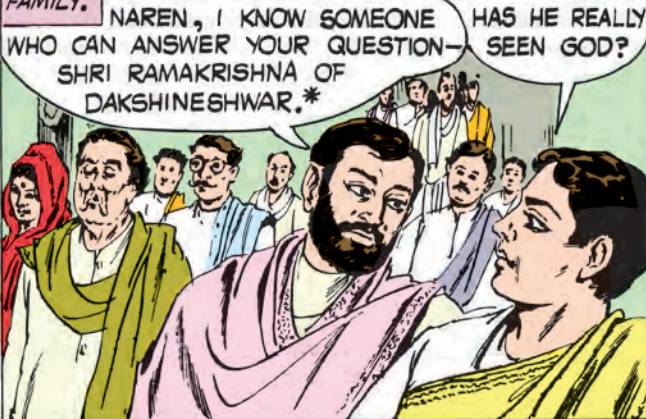


* A REFORMIST SECT FOUNDED BY RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY.

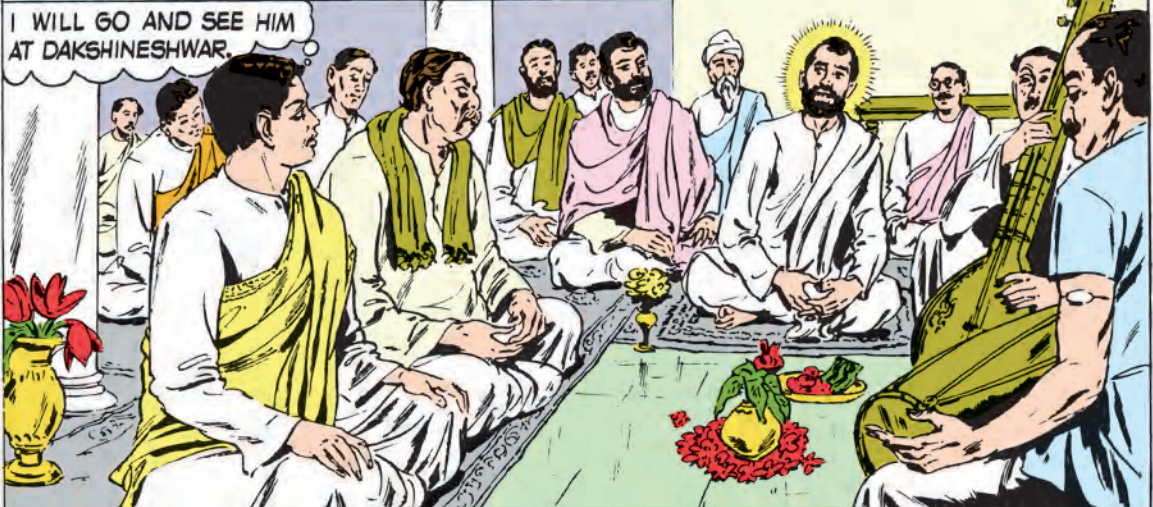
IN HIS CEASELESS AND INSISTENT QUEST FOR GOD, HE APPROACHED MANY A PARSON AND PANDIT.



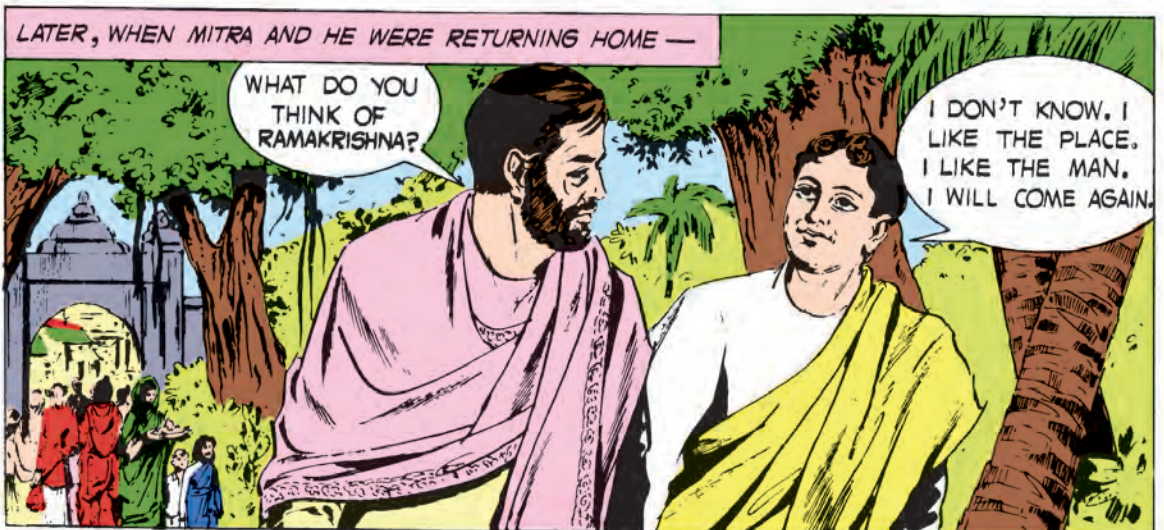
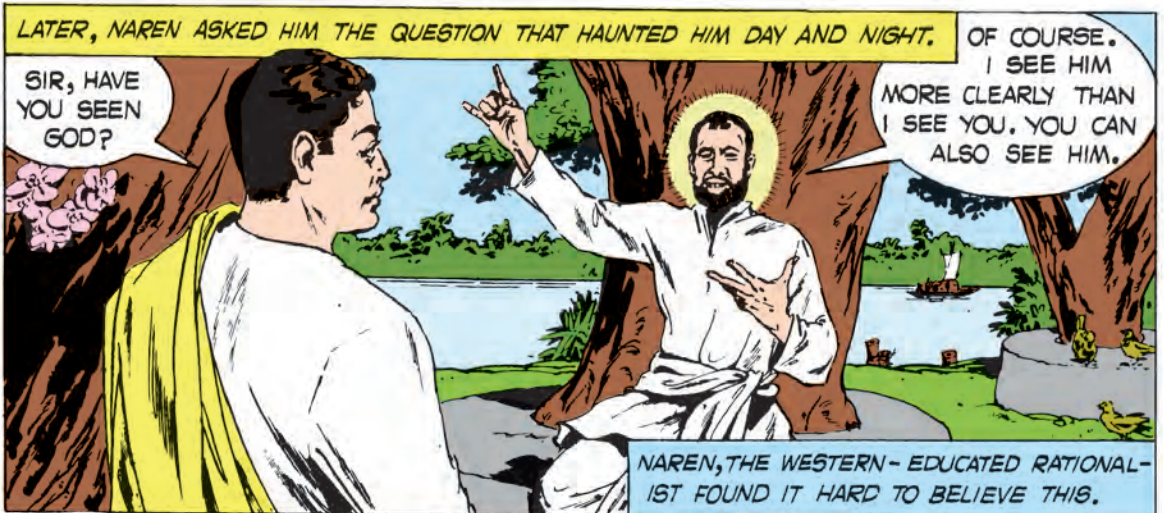
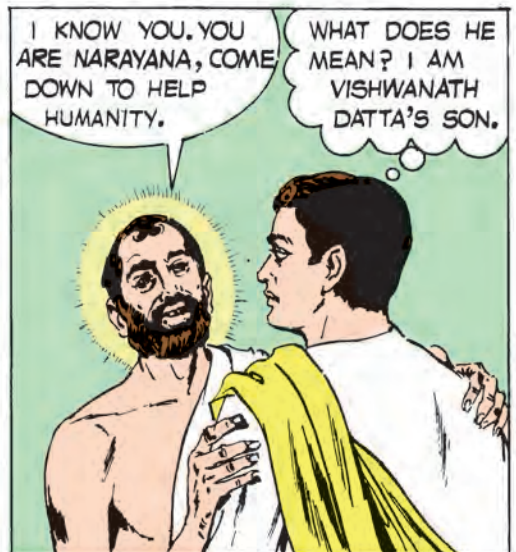
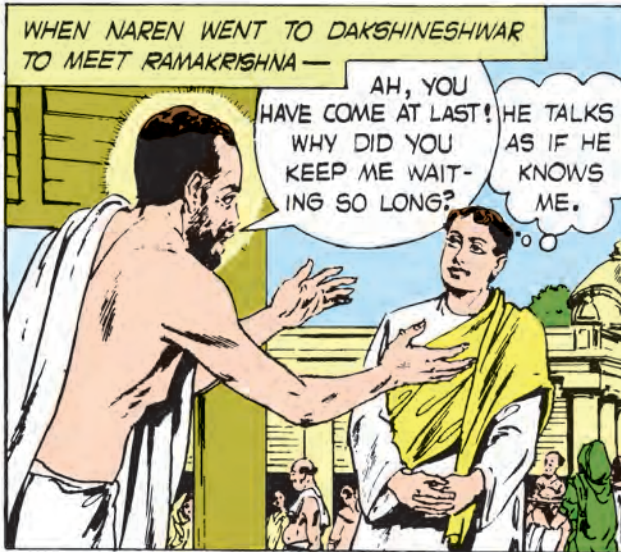
ONE DAY, AT A RELIGIOUS MEETING, HE MET SURENDRANATH MITRA, A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY.

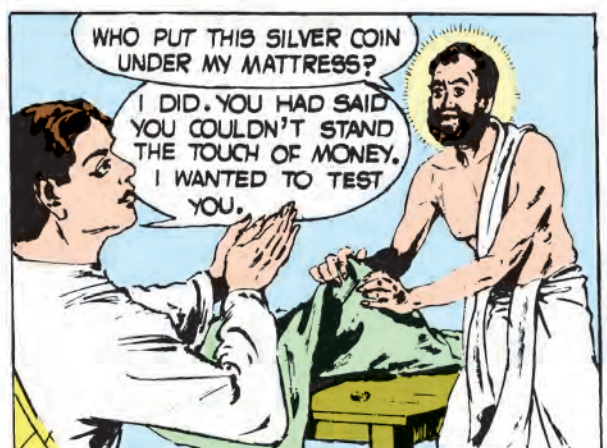
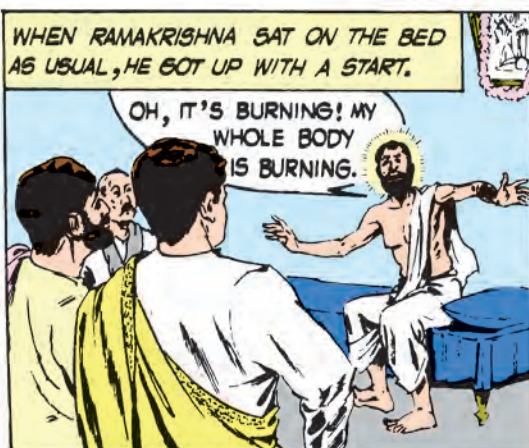
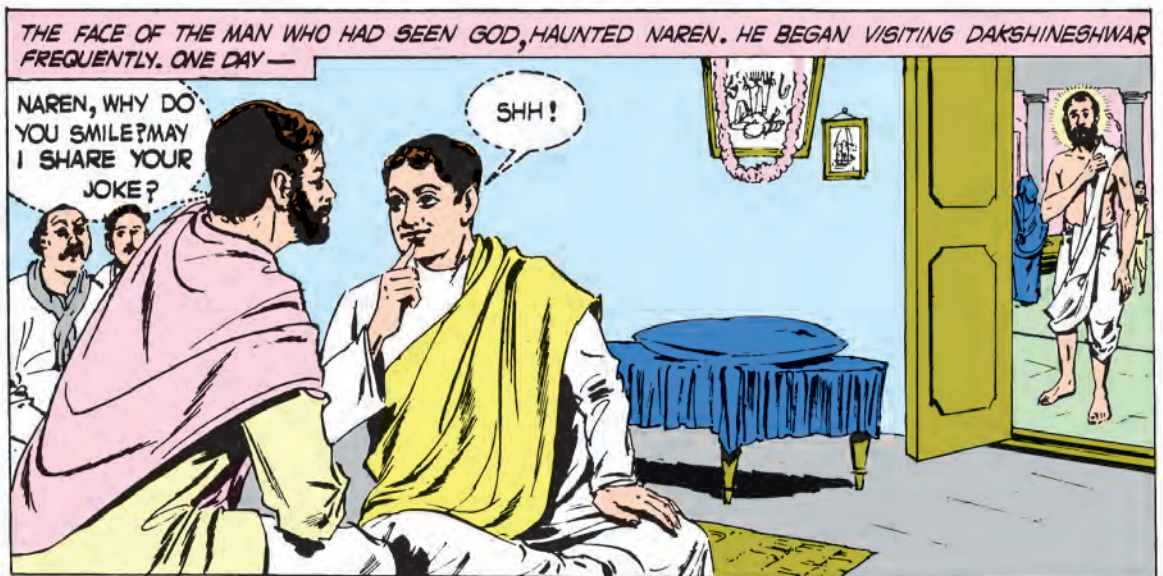
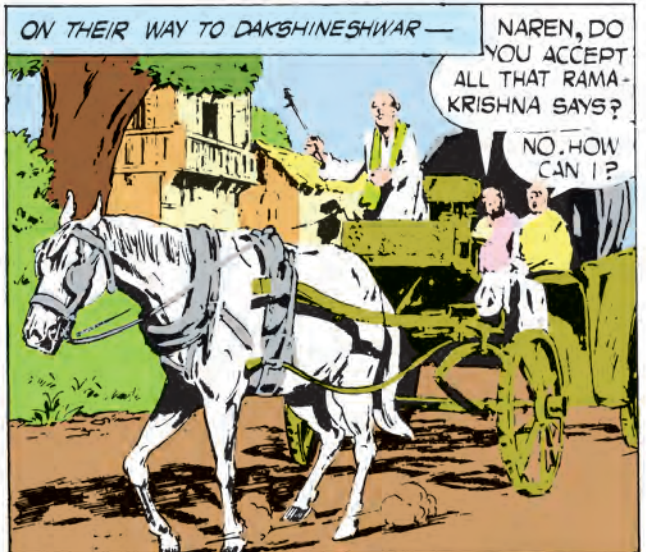


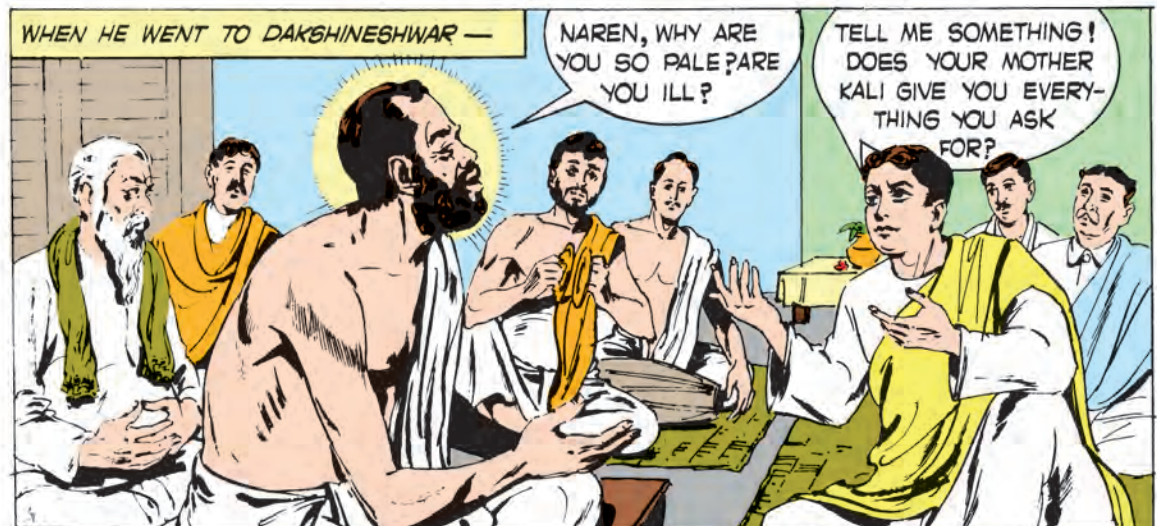
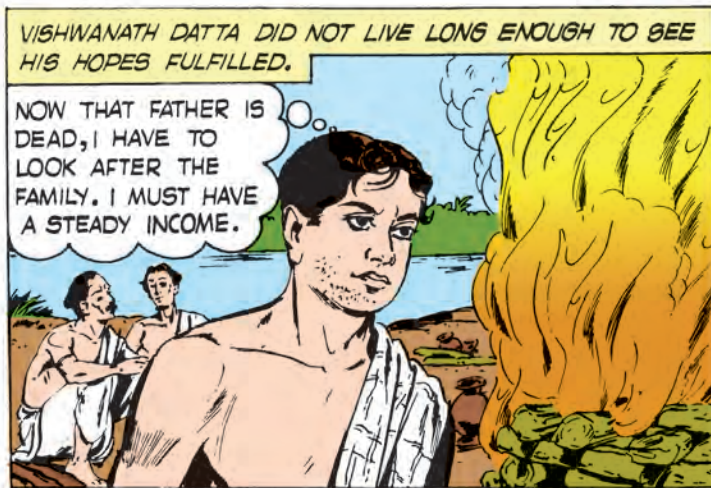
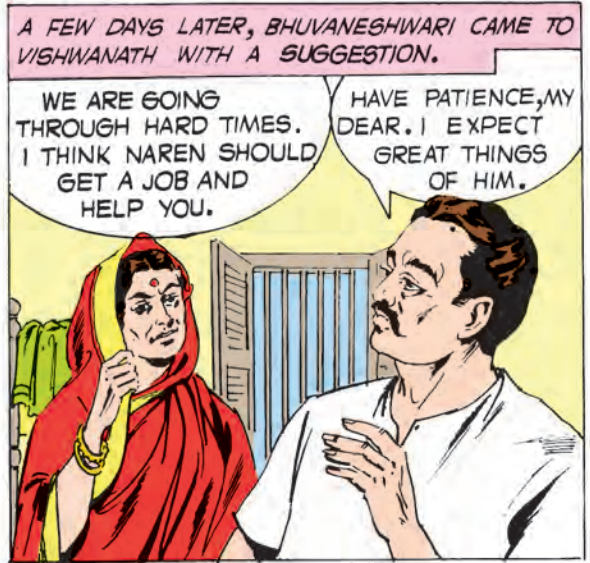
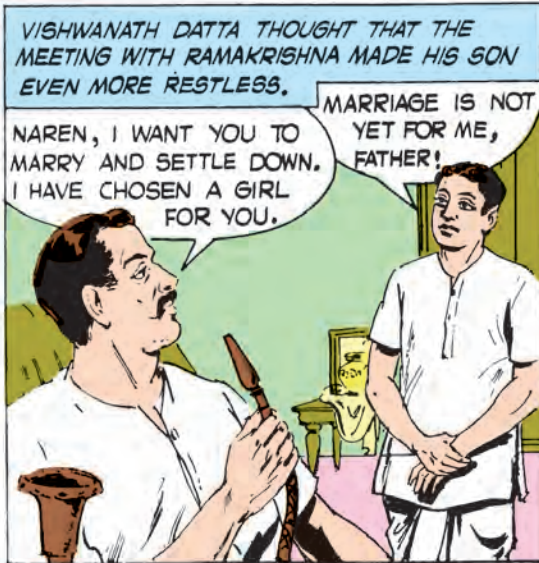
THE NEXT DAY, AT SURENDRANATH MITRA'S PLACE —

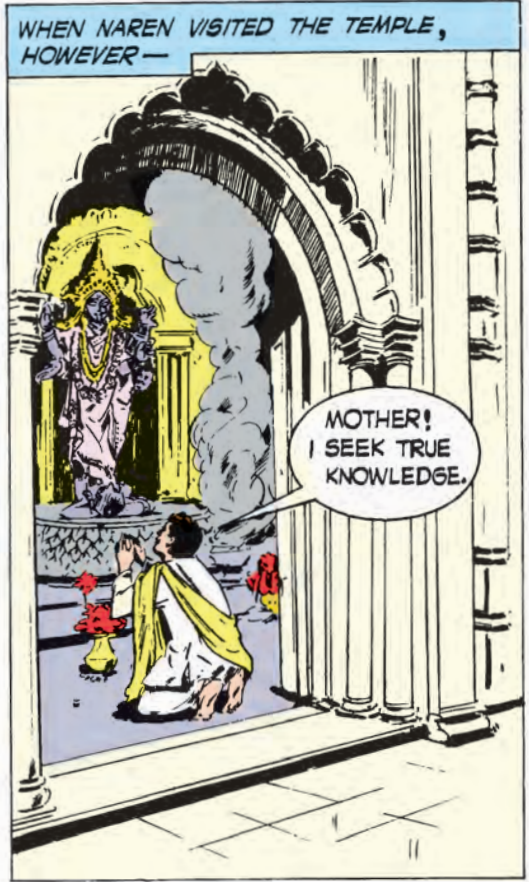


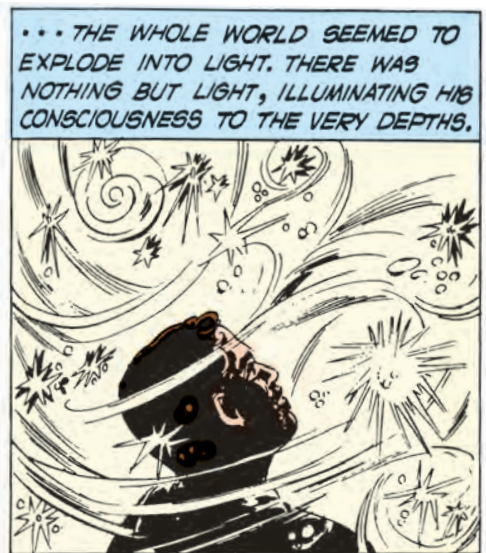
* A PLACE FOUR MILES TO THE NORTH OF CALCUTTA.

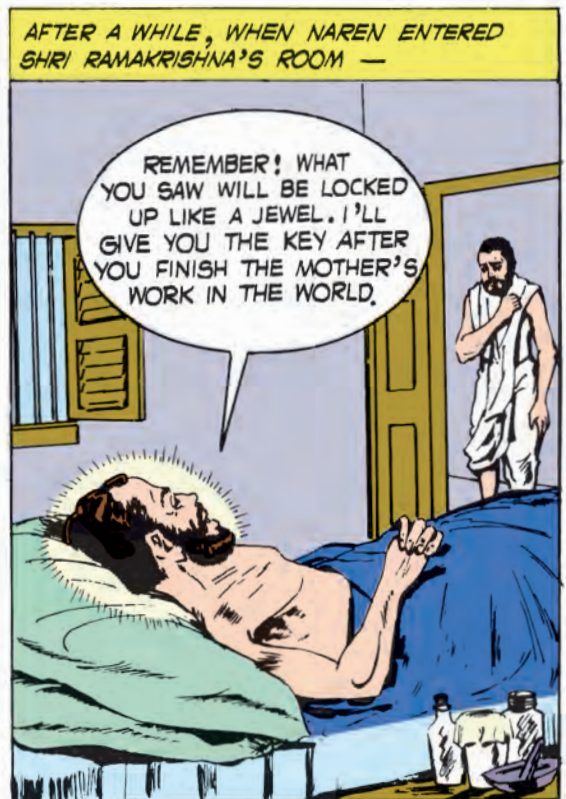
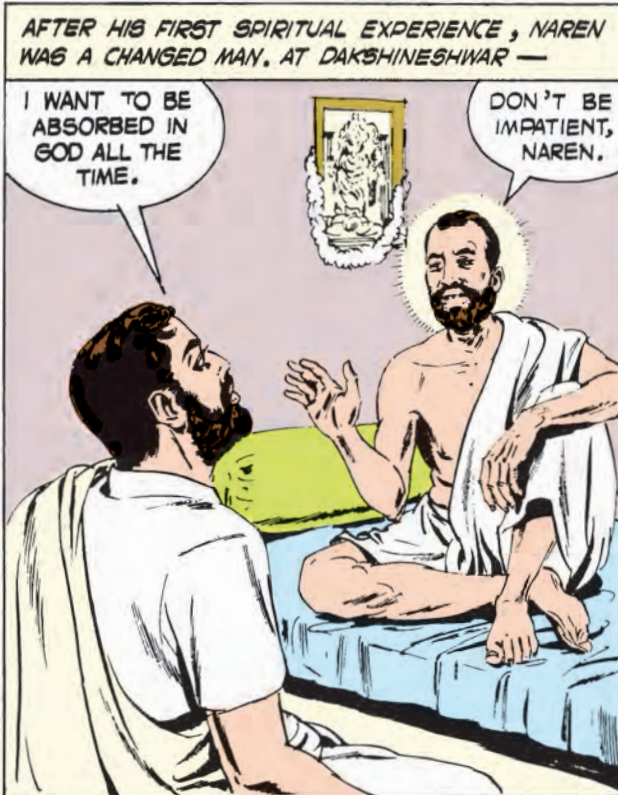


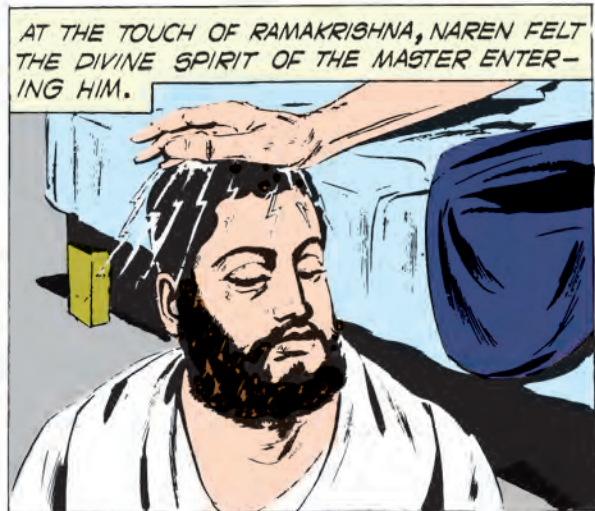
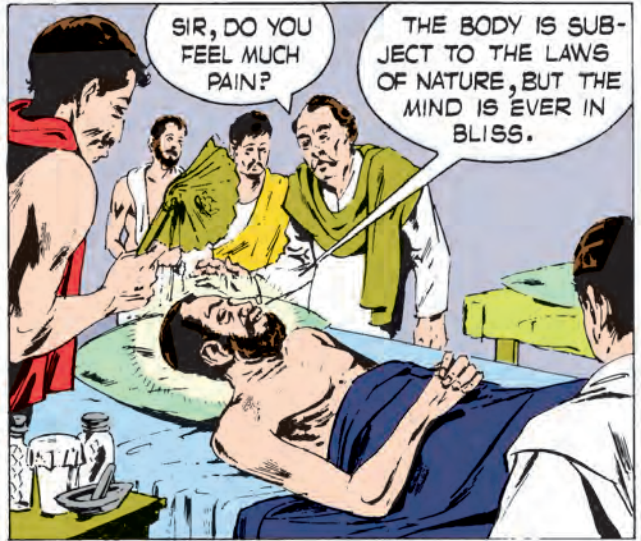
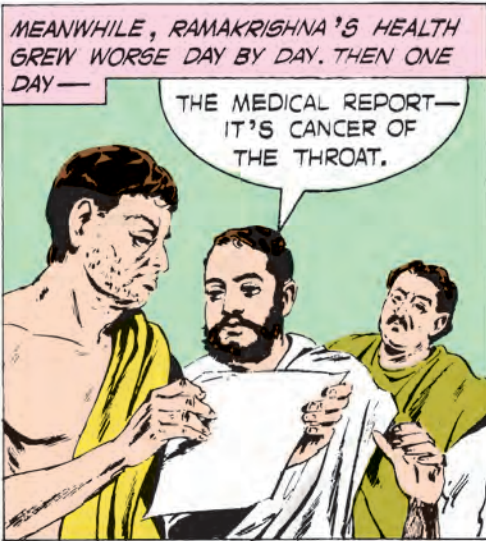




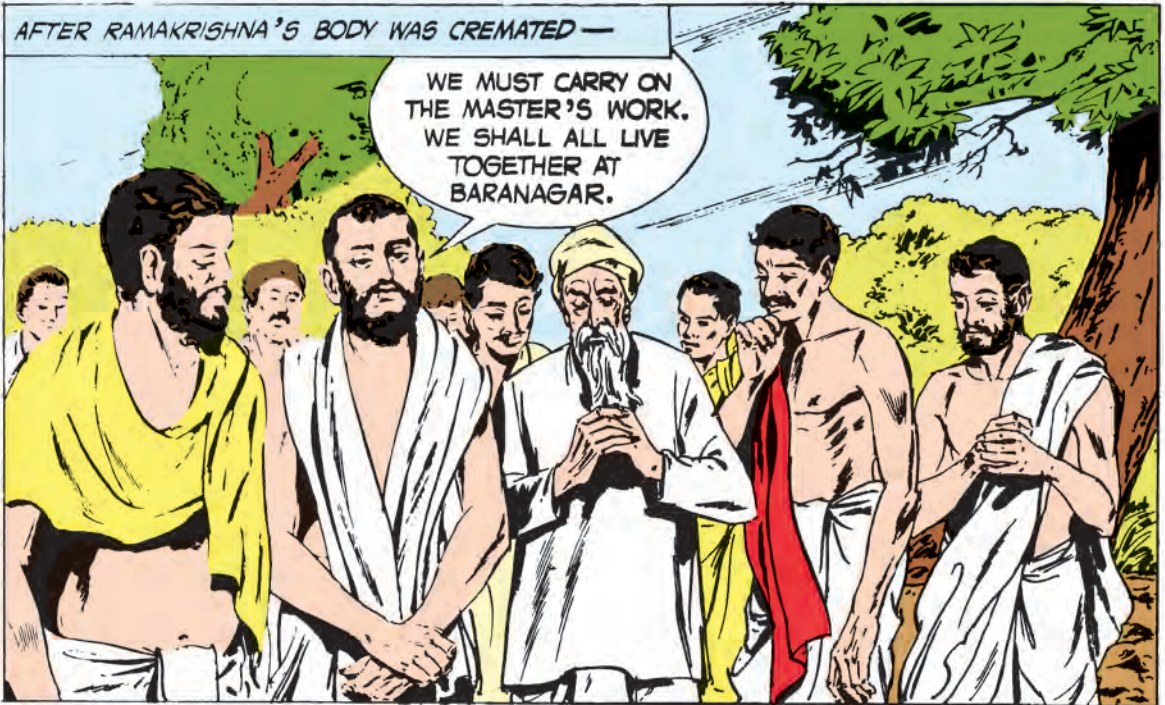




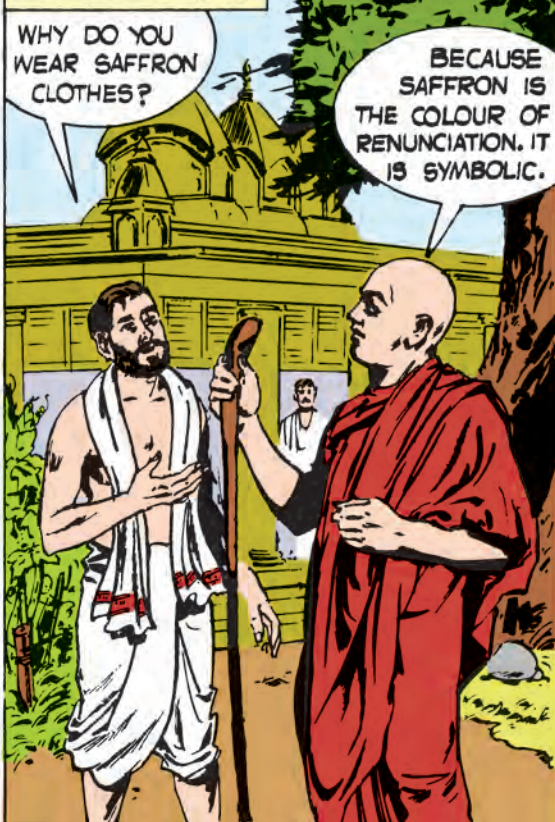




AFTER RAMAKRISHNA'S BODY WAS CREMATED —



NAREN DONNED A MONK'S GARB AND HAD HIS HEAD SHAVED.



HE THEN WENT TO SARADA DEVI.*

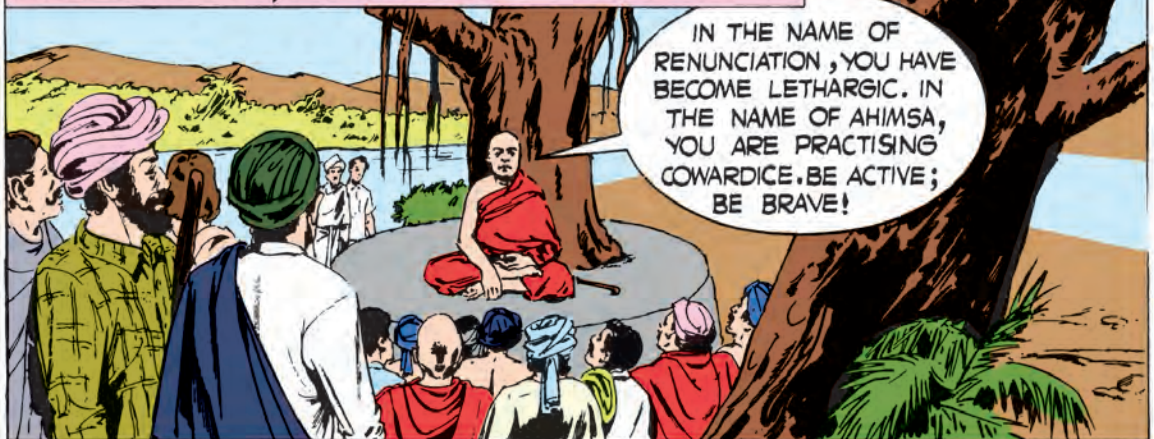


* SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S WIFE

THUS THE SANYASI WITH STAFF IN HAND, STARTED ON HIS PILGRIMAGE.



WHEREVER HE WENT, PEOPLE RUSHED TO HEAR HIM SPEAK.



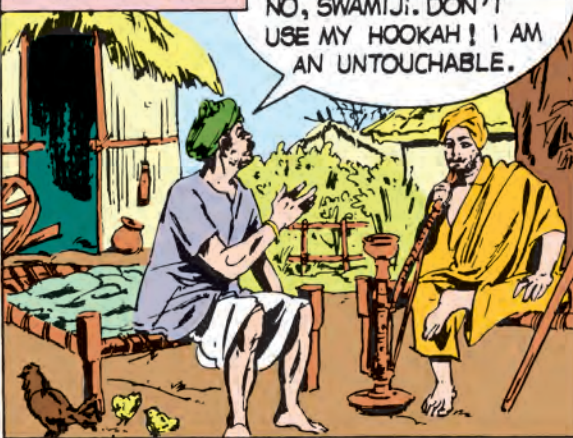
ONE DAY, AS HE WAS RESTING AFTER A LONG DAY'S JOURNEY, IN A FOREST —



THE TIGER LOOKED AT HIM AND SLOWLY WENT AWAY.



DURING HIS LONG TRAVELS IN INDIA, HE KNEW MANY MEN.



NO, SWAMIJI. DON'T USE MY HOOKAH! I AM AN UNTOUCHABLE.

HE WOULD SLEEP IN THE HUTS OF PARIAHS...



...AND CONVERSE ON EQUAL TERMS WITH MAHARAJAS.

ONE DAY, AT THE ROYAL COURT OF ALWAR—



WELCOME, SWAMIJI. WE ARE WAITING FOR YOU.

GOD BLESS YOU!



THE YOUNG, WESTERNISED MAHARAJA WAS A SCEPTIC.

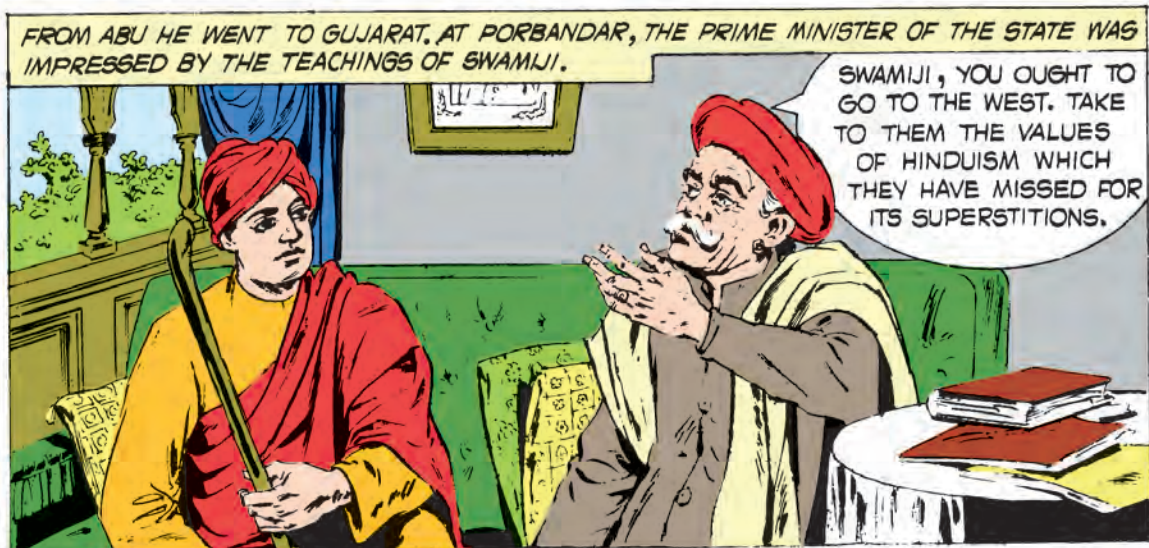
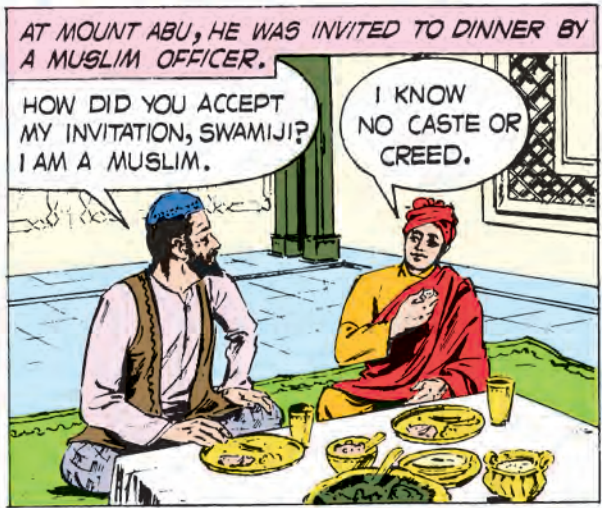


SWAMIJI, YOU TALK OF GOD. DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE STONE GODS IN THE TEMPLES?

YES.

BUT HOW CAN GOD BE A THING MADE OF STONE?





WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD IN MIND WAS THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS TO BE HELD IN CHICAGO. ONE DAY —

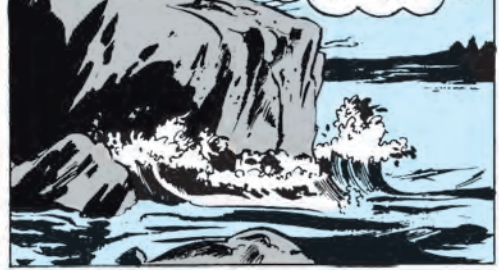
SWAMIJI, WILL YOU GO TO CHICAGO TO ATTEND THE PARLIAMENT?

PERHAPS IT WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE MY COUNTRY. BUT I'LL DECIDE LATER.



DOWN SOUTH, SWAMIJI REACHED KANYAKUMARI.

AT LAST ! I HAVE SEEN MY COUNTRY FROM THE HIMALAYAS TO KANYAKUMARI. I KNEW HER RICHES. I HAVE SEEN HOW POOR SHE IS.



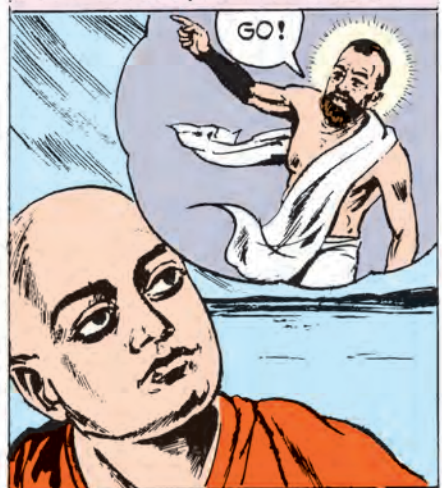
SWAMIJI, STARTED HIS JOURNEY NORTHWARDS. AT MADRAS BEACH —

SWAMIJI, WE HAVE COLLECTED THE FUNDS TO SEND YOU TO THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS.

BUT I HAVEN'T YET DECIDED TO GO.



THEN ONE DAY, HE HAD A VISION —



HE THEN MADE UP HIS MIND. HELP CAME FROM UNEXPECTED QUARTERS.

SWAMIJI, THE MAHARAJA OF KHETRI HAS REQUESTED YOU TO SEE HIM.

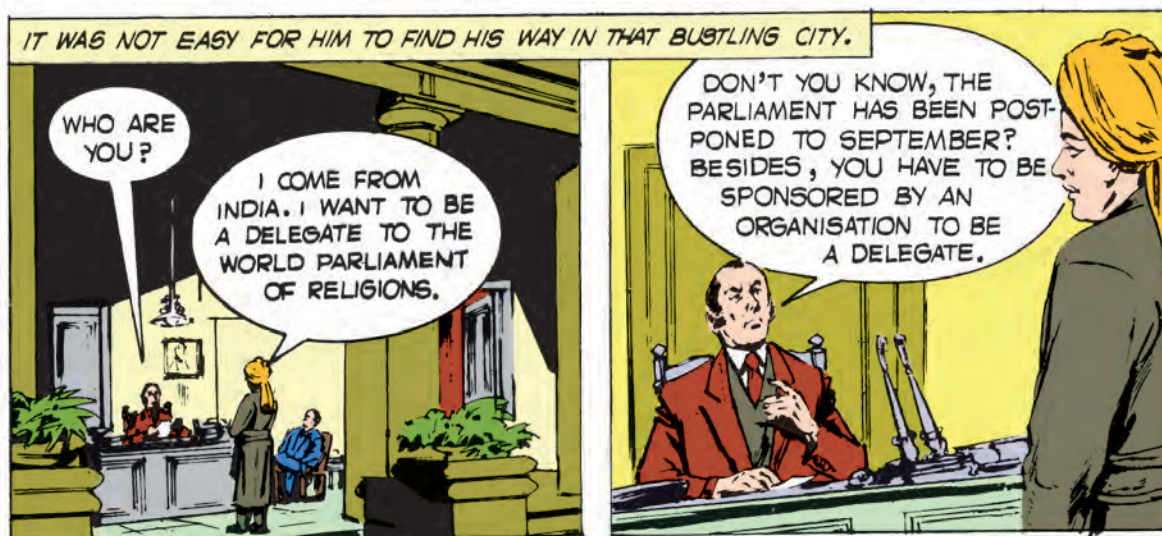
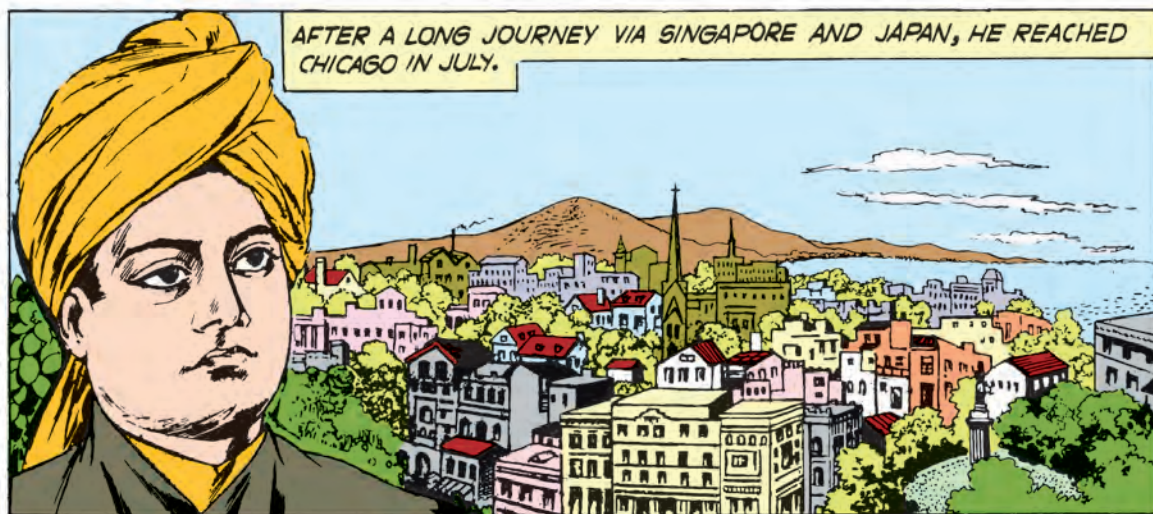


AT KHETRI —

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ! PLEASE ACCEPT MY HUMBLE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS YOUR TRIP TO CHICAGO.



AFTER THIS, SWAMIJI CAME TO BE KNOWN AS VIVEKANANDA*.



BUT VIVEKANANDA DID NOT WORRY.

I AM HERE AMONG
THE CHILDREN OF THE
SON OF MARY.
LORD JESUS WILL
HELP ME.



ON THE TRAIN WHICH TOOK HIM FROM CHICAGO
TO BOSTON, HE MET MISS KATE SANBORN.

I TOO AM GOING
TO BOSTON. YOU ARE
WELCOME TO STAY
AT MY RESIDENCE.

THANK
YOU, SISTER.



THE INVITATION CAME AS A BOON TO SWAMIJI
BECAUSE HE HAD LITTLE MONEY LEFT WITH HIM.

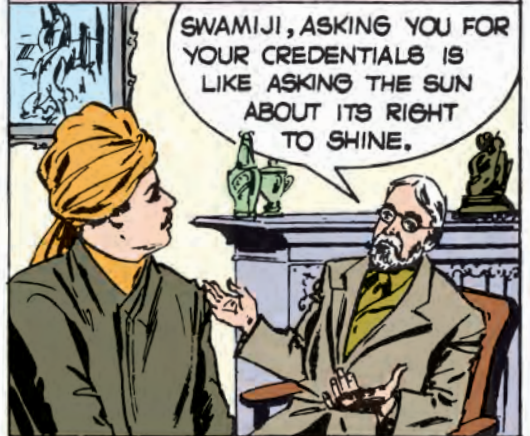
AT MISS SANBORN'S HOME, ONE DAY —

PROFESSOR WRIGHT
IS HERE TO SEE YOU.

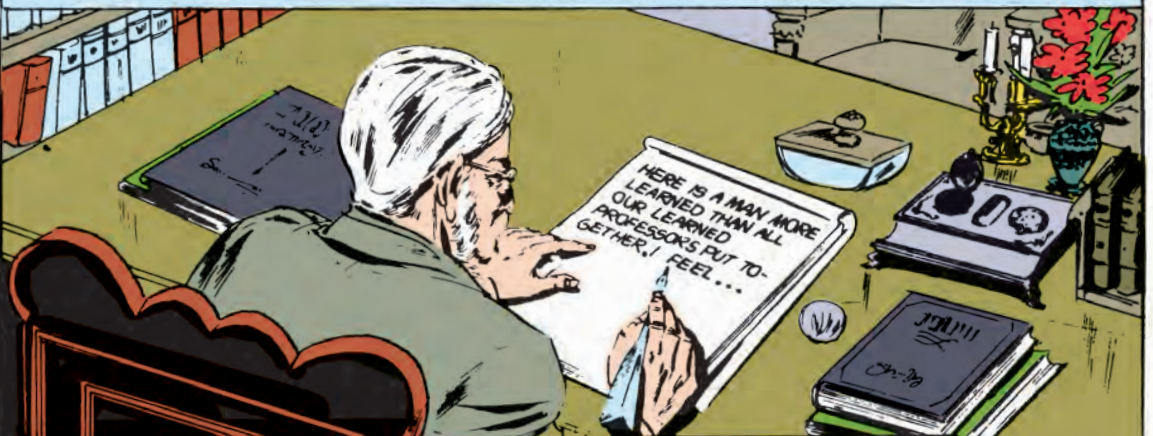


WHEN VIVEKANANDA EXPLAINED HIS
DIFFICULTY TO PROFESSOR J. H. WRIGHT —

SWAMIJI, ASKING YOU FOR
YOUR CREDENTIALS IS
LIKE ASKING THE SUN
ABOUT ITS RIGHT
TO SHINE.

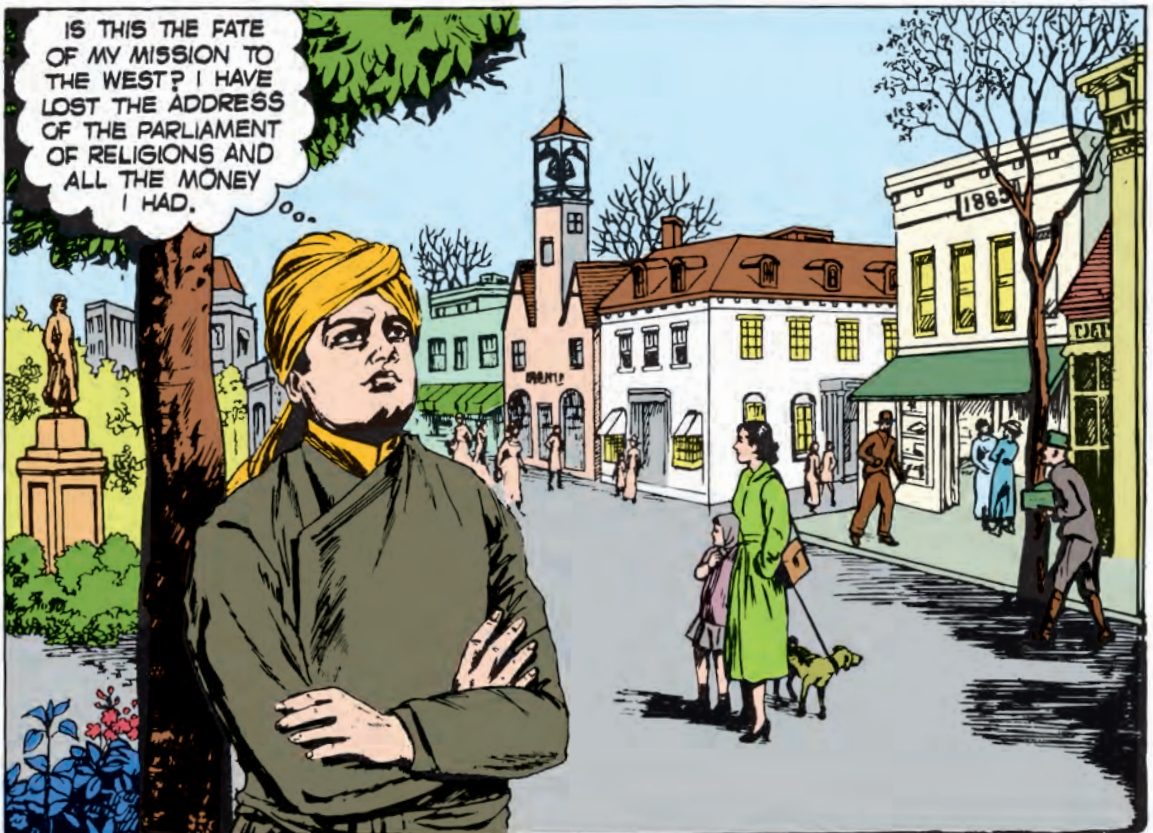


PROFESSOR WRIGHT WROTE TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE OF THE PARLIAMENT.



THE CREDENTIALS WERE ACCEPTED, AND VIVEKANANDA LEFT FOR CHICAGO.





HE WALKED UP TO MANY A HOUSE ALONG THE FASHIONABLE STREETS OF CHICAGO AND MET WITH MANY A REBUFF.



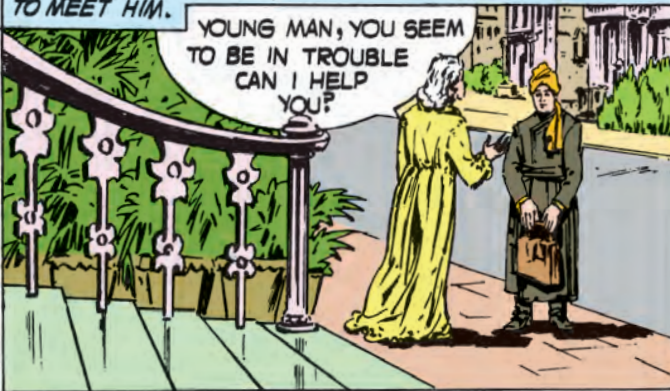
WILL YOU PLEASE GIVE ME SOMETHING TO EAT?

GO AWAY.



AT LAST, OBSERVING ALL THIS FROM A WINDOW OF HER APARTMENT, MRS. HALE, A KIND OLD LADY, CAME DOWN TO MEET HIM.

YOUNG MAN, YOU SEEM TO BE IN TROUBLE CAN I HELP YOU?



WHEN VIVEKANANDA EXPLAINED HIS DIFFICULTIES —

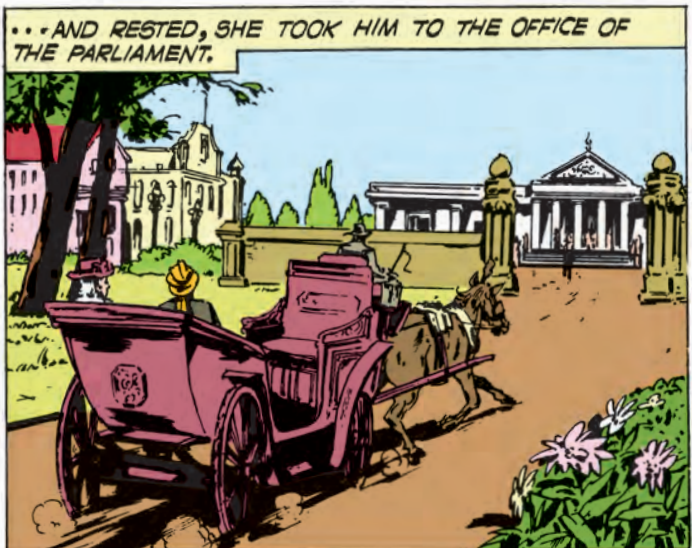
PLEASE COME HOME WITH ME.



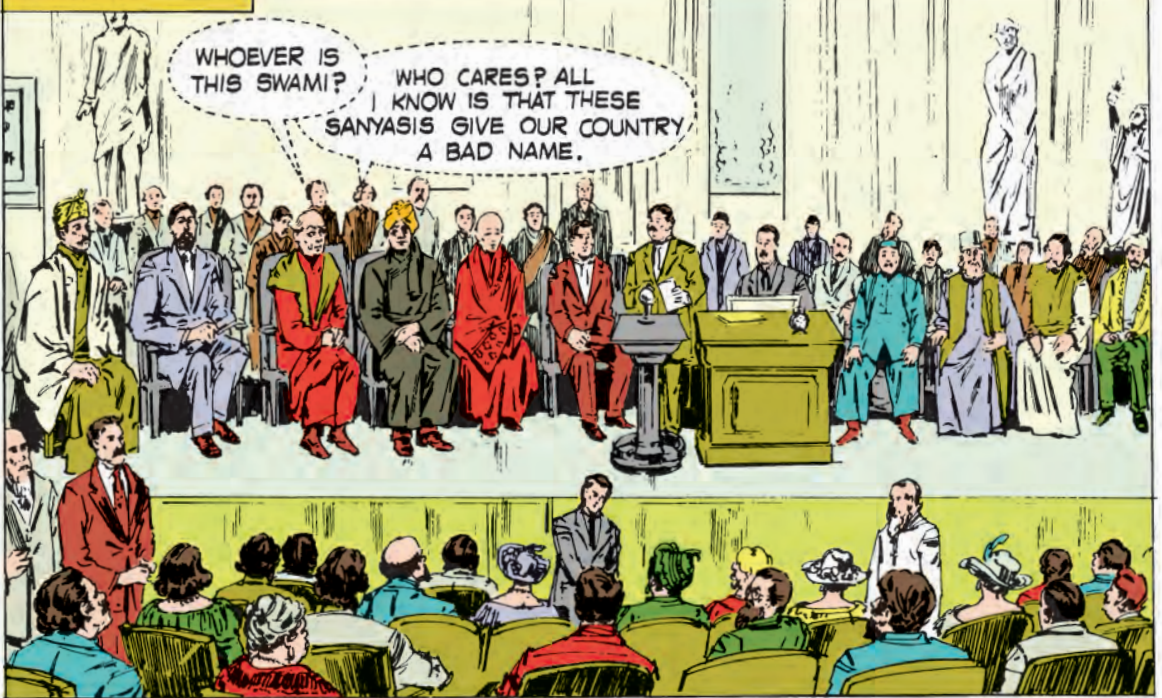
AFTER HE HAD EATEN . . .



. . . AND RESTED, SHE TOOK HIM TO THE OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT.



AT THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, THE OFFICIAL DELEGATES FROM INDIA RESENTED HIS PRESENCE THERE.



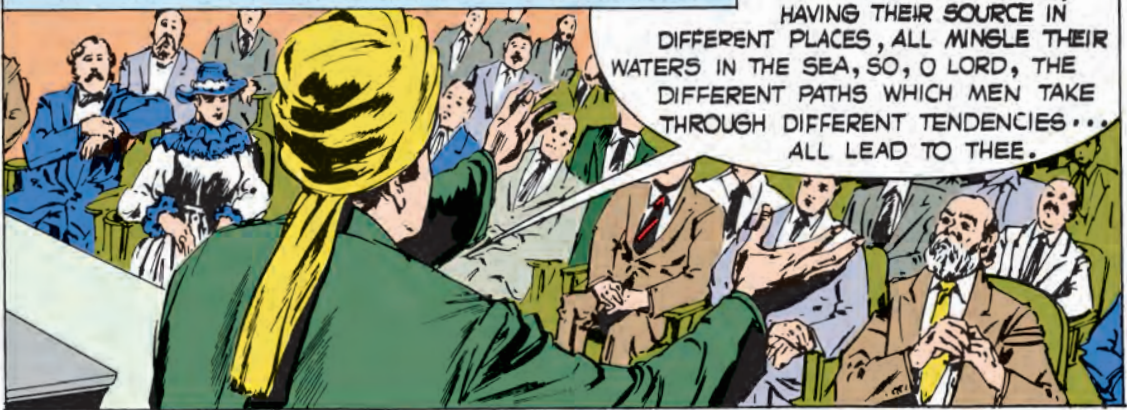
AFTER THE LONG-WINDED SPEECHES CAME VIVEKANANDA'S TURN.



WITH TREMBLING HEART AND A SILENT PRAYER TO SARASWATI*, VIVEKANANDA ROSE TO SPEAK. THE VAST AUDIENCE WAS THRILLED BY HIS VERY FIRST WORDS.



IT TOOK FULL TWO MINUTES BEFORE THE TUMULT SUBSIDED.



VIVEKANANDA HAD SUCCEEDED IN EXPLAINING WHAT GOD MEANT TO THE HINDU MIND. IT WAS A LUCID EXPLANATION. IT MOVED THE LISTENERS.

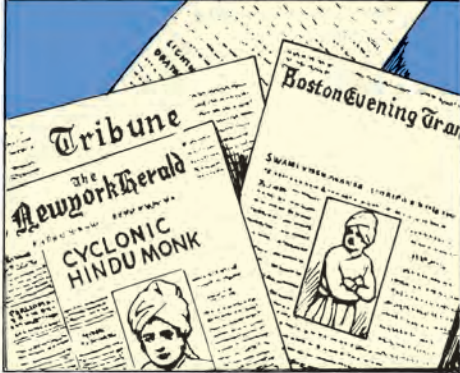


WHEN IT WAS OVER, SCORES OF MEN AND WOMEN WALKED OVER THE BENCHES IN THEIR EAGERNESS TO MEET HIM.



* HINDU GODDESS OF WISDOM.

THE NEXT DAY, THE NEWSPAPERS CARRIED GLOWING HEADLINES ABOUT THE SWAMI WHO HAD CAPTURED EVERYBODY'S IMAGINATION.

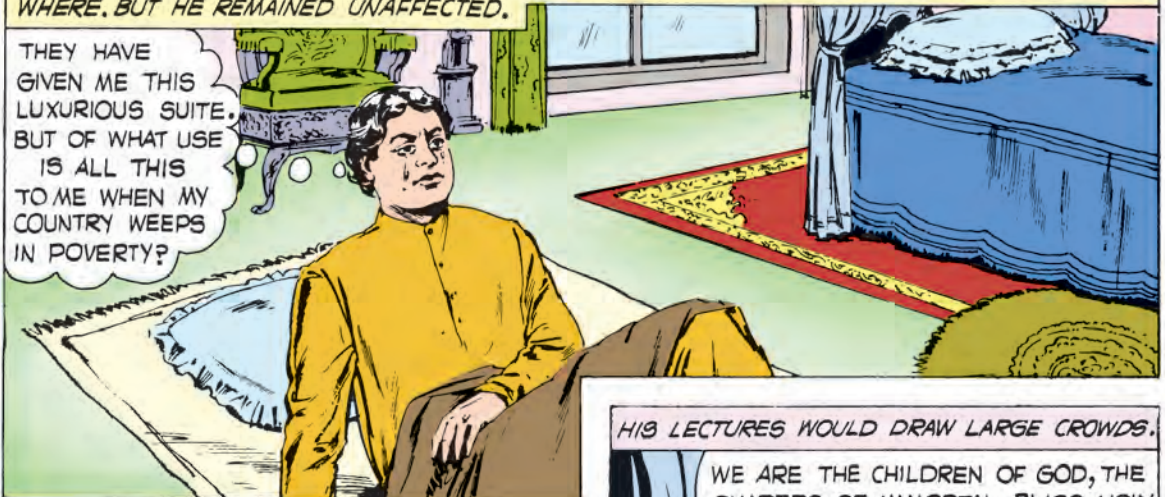


HE WAS THE SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION EVERYWHERE.



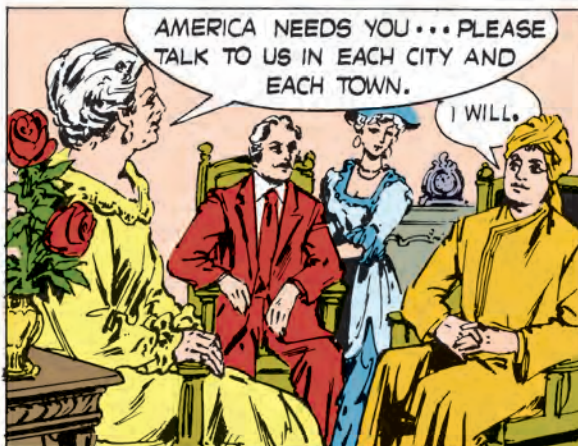
THAT WAS THE END OF VIVEKANANDA'S TROUBLES IN THE U.S.A. HE WAS LIONISED EVERYWHERE, BUT HE REMAINED UNAFFECTED.

THEY HAVE GIVEN ME THIS LUXURIOUS SUITE, BUT OF WHAT USE IS ALL THIS TO ME WHEN MY COUNTRY WEEPS IN POVERTY?

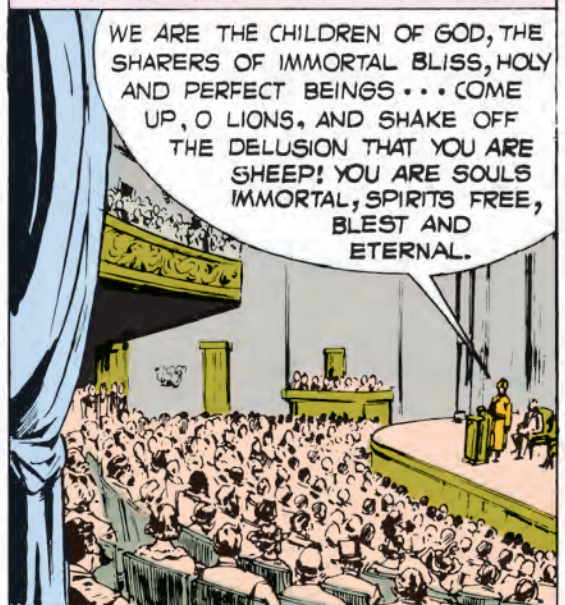


HIS LECTURES WOULD DRAW LARGE CROWDS.

WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD, THE SHARERS OF IMMORTAL BLISS, HOLY AND PERFECT BEINGS... COME UP, O LIONS, AND SHAKE OFF THE DELUSION THAT YOU ARE SHEEP! YOU ARE SOULS IMMORTAL, SPIRITS FREE, BLESSED AND ETERNAL.



VIVEKANANDA WENT FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER AND SPOKE WHENEVER REQUESTED TO DO SO.



ONE DAY IN TEXAS, INSPIGATED BY SOME FANATIC CHRISTIANS, THE AUDIENCE BECAME ROUGH. THEY MADE HIM STAND ON A BARREL AND SPEAK.

HE IS AN ATHEIST WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN HIMSELF! THE OLD RELIGIONS SAID THAT HE WAS AN ATHEIST WHO DID NOT BELIEVE IN GOD! THE NEW RELIGION TELLS YOU THAT HE IS AN ATHEIST WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN HIMSELF!

LET'S SEE IF HE PRACTISES WHAT HE PREACHES.

YEAH! YEAH!



HE WAS PELTED WITH TOMATOES AND EGGS. SOME EVEN TOOK OUT THEIR PISTOLS AND FIRED SHOTS IN THE AIR.

THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD IS THE HISTORY OF A FEW MEN WHO HAD FAITH IN THEMSELVES. THAT FAITH CALLS OUT THE DIVINITY WITHIN. YOU CAN DO ANYTHING!

HA! HA!

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE, MAN!

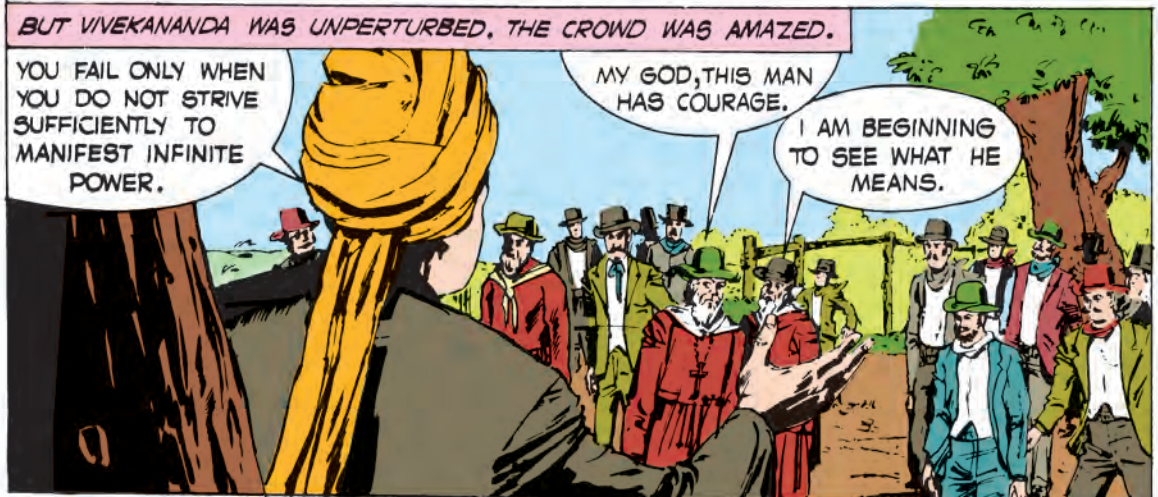


BUT VIVEKANANDA WAS UNPERTURBED. THE CROWD WAS AMAZED.

YOU FAIL ONLY WHEN YOU DO NOT STRIVE SUFFICIENTLY TO MANIFEST INFINITE POWER.

MY GOD, THIS MAN HAS COURAGE.

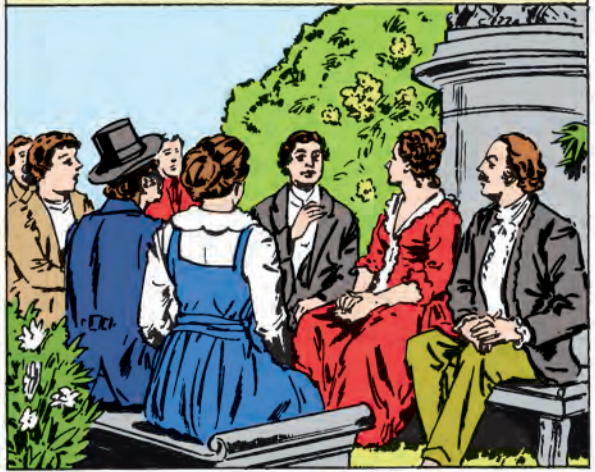
I AM BEGINNING TO SEE WHAT HE MEANS.



THE SWAMI TALKED TO MEN AND WOMEN, THE RICH AND THE POOR ALIKE.



AT THOUSAND ISLAND PARK, HE EXPLAINED THE PROFOUND PHILOSOPHY OF YOGA AND VEDANTA TO TWELVE SELECTED DISCIPLES.*



FROM THE U.S.A., VIVEKANANDA PROCEEDED TO ENGLAND WHERE HE LECTURED EXTENSIVELY. ONE DAY, AT A SMALL MEETING —



HER NAME IS MARGARET NOBLE. SHE RUNS A SMALL SCHOOL.

WHY ARE YOU SHY, SISTER?

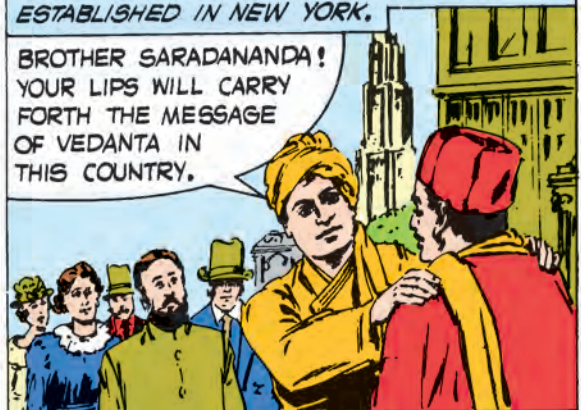


FOR MISS NOBLE, THE SWAMI SOON BECAME AN OBJECT OF REVERENCE.



DURING HIS SECOND VISIT TO AMERICA, HE ESTABLISHED HIS WORK ON A MORE SOLID FOUNDATION. A VEDANTA SOCIETY WAS ESTABLISHED IN NEW YORK.

BROTHER SARADANANDA! YOUR LIPS WILL CARRY FORTH THE MESSAGE OF VEDANTA IN THIS COUNTRY.



* IT WAS AROUND THIS TIME THAT HIS FAMOUS WORK, RAJA YOGA WAS WRITTEN.

HE RETURNED TO ENGLAND, AND FOUND ANOTHER OF HIS BROTHER DISCIPLES AWAITING HIM THERE.



ON HIS RETURN JOURNEY TO INDIA —



HE FIRST REACHED COLOMBO ON JANUARY 15, 1897. THE WELCOME THERE WAS WARM, TRIUMPHANT AND TUMULTUOUS. THOUSANDS FLUNG THEMSELVES ON THE GROUND TO TOUCH HIS FEET.



HIS DEPARTURE FROM INDIA WAS UNANNOUNCED; HIS RETURN, A NATIONAL EVENT. AT RAMNAD, SOME EAGER MEN REMOVED THE HORSES FROM HIS CARRIAGE AND PULLED IT THEMSELVES. THE RAJA OF RAMNAD WAS ONE OF THEM.



THE WORDS HE SPOKE AT RAMNAD STIRRED THE SOUL OF THE NATION.

THE SLEEPING CORPSE APPEARS TO BE AWAKENING... INDIA, THIS MOTHERLAND OF OURS, FROM DEEP, LONG SLEEP... NEVER IS SHE GOING TO SLEEP ANY MORE! NO OUTSIDE POWERS CAN HOLD HER BACK ANY MORE! FOR THE INFINITE GIANT IS RISING TO HER FEET!



FROM RAMNAD TO MADRAS AND TO CALCUTTA, WHEREVER HE WENT, THE CROWDS YEARNED TO HAVE A GLIMPSE OF HIM. THE YOUNG MEN OF THE COUNTRY WERE INSPIRED BY HIS WORDS.

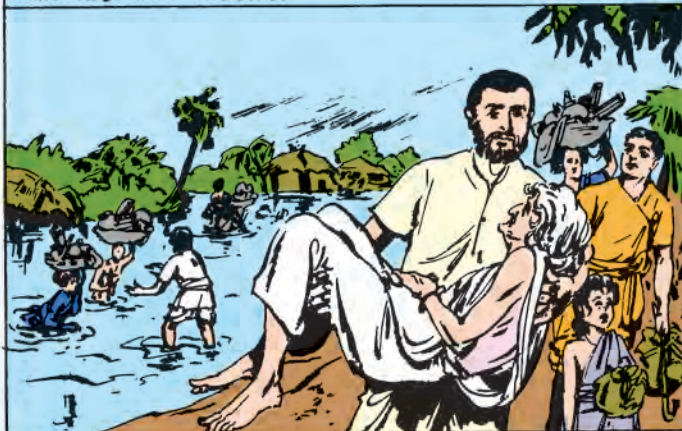
NONE IS REALLY WEAK... STAND UP! ASSERT YOURSELF, PROCLAIM THE GOD WITHIN YOU! DO NOT DENY HIM! ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED!



VIVEKANANDA ORGANISED HIS FELLOW SANYASIS INTO A DEDICATED BAND OF SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL WORKERS. THEY NURSED THE SICK, FED THE POOR...



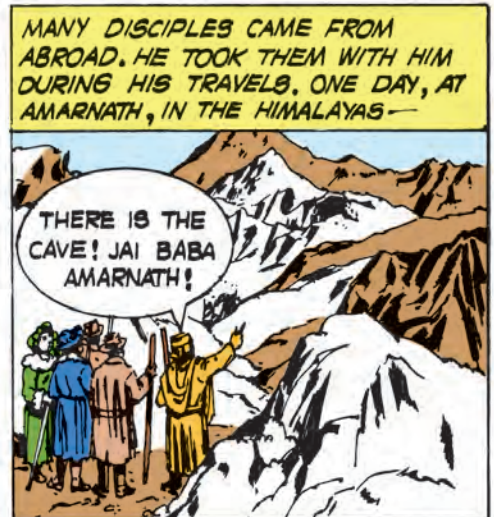
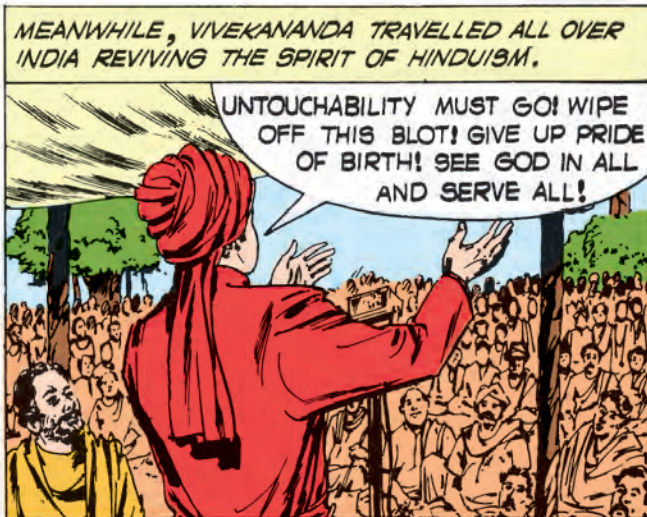
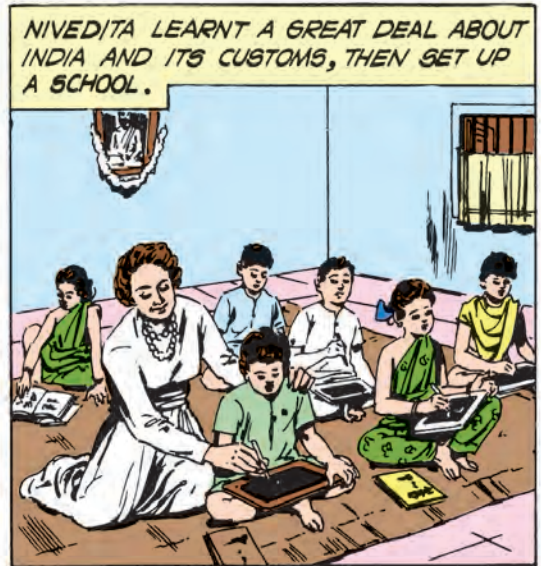
...AND RENDERED HELP TO THE NEEDY DURING FAMINES AND FLOODS.



ONE DAY, A VISITOR FROM ENGLAND ARRIVED.

SWAMIJI, REMEMBER ME? I AM MARGARET. I HAVE COME TO DEDICATE MYSELF TO YOU AND TO YOUR GREAT MISSION.





WHILE IN CALCUTTA, HE FORMALLY CONSECRATED THE RAMAKRISHNA MONASTERY AT BELUR AS THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER.



AND THEN PAID A VISIT TO THE SPIRITUAL CENTRES ESTABLISHED BY HIM IN THE WEST.



MEANWHILE, THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER DEVOTED ITSELF TO THE SERVICE OF THE POOR.

ALAS, IN OUR COUNTRY THE POOR REMAIN WRETCHED. BUT THEY ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR NATION.



THEY FED THE POOR, MANY OF WHOM WERE SANTHAL TRIBALS.

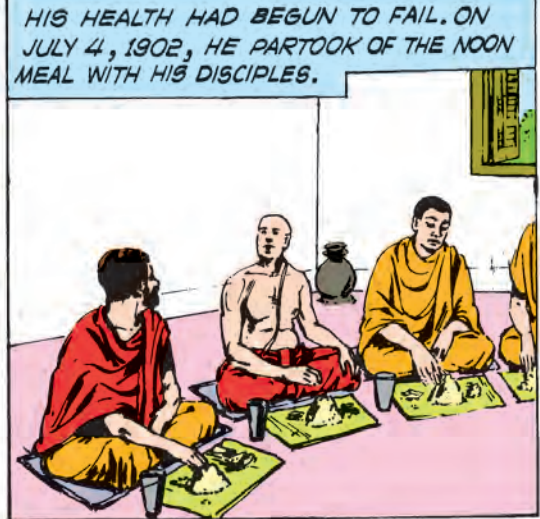


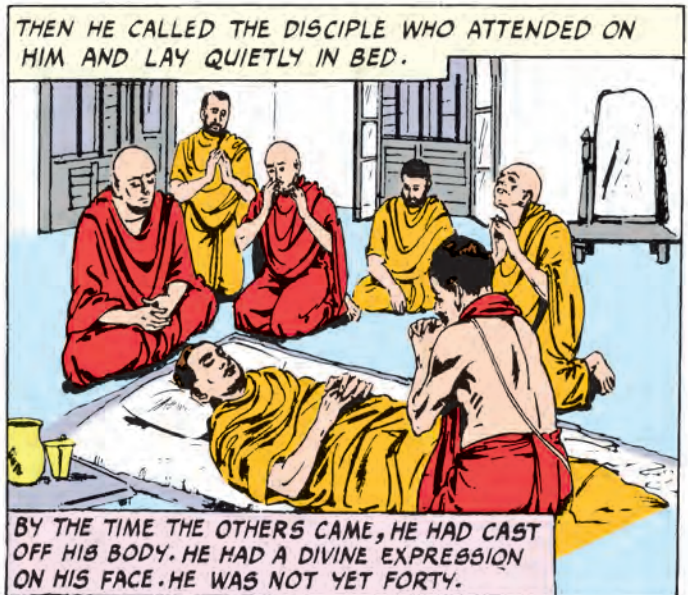
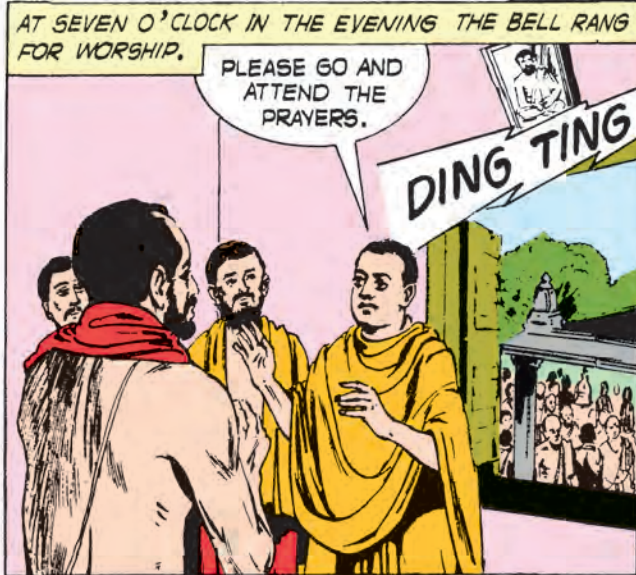
WHY DO YOU FUSS SO MUCH OVER THOSE SANTHALS?

THEY ARE AS MUCH THE CHILDREN OF GOD AS YOU OR I.

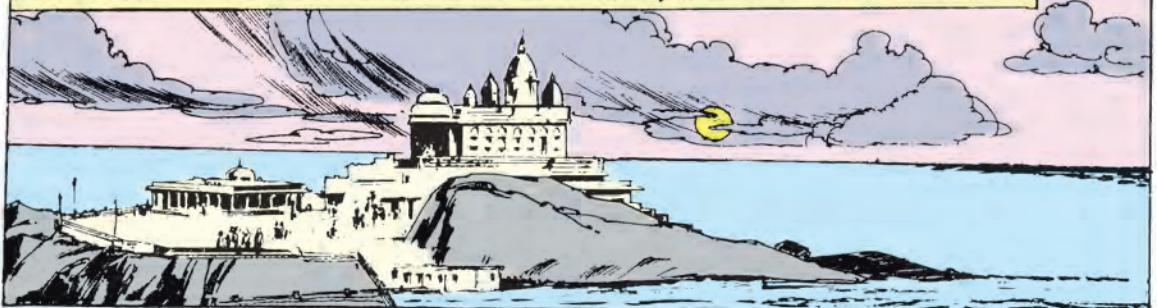


HIS HEALTH HAD BEGUN TO FAIL. ON JULY 4, 1902, HE PARTOOK OF THE NOON MEAL WITH HIS DISCIPLES.





TODAY, A MAGNIFICENT MEMORIAL STANDS AT KANYAKUMARI, AT THE VERY SPOT WHERE, MANY YEARS AGO, HE HAD DISCOVERED HIS LIFE'S TWIN MISSION OF ELEVATING THE MASSES OF HIS COUNTRY AND PREACHING INDIA'S UNIVERSAL, SPIRITUAL MESSAGE ABROAD.

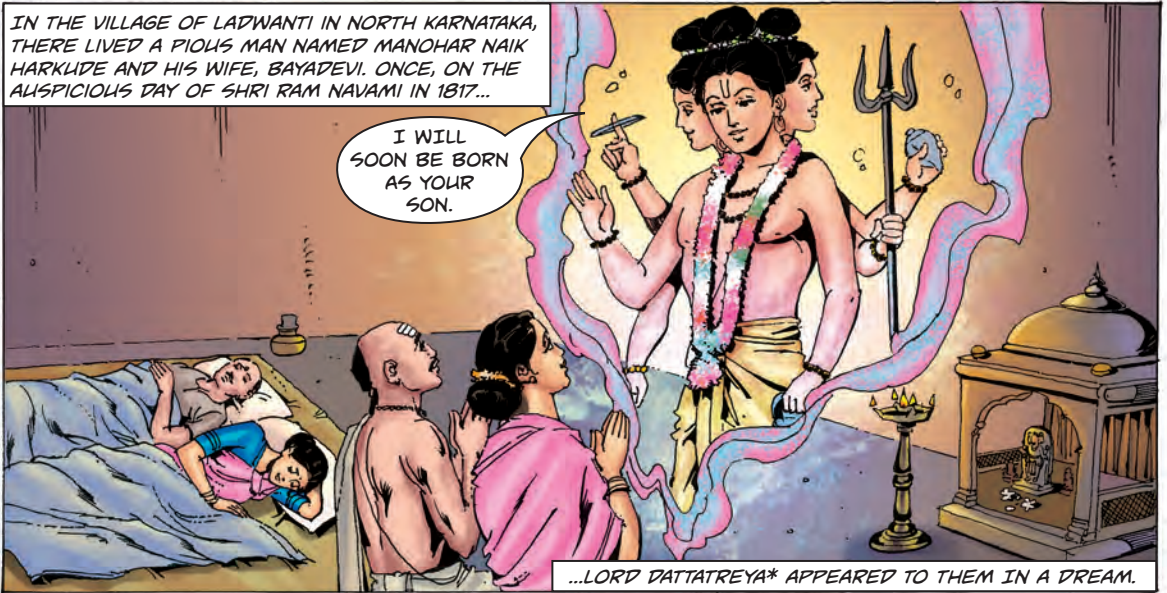


MANIK PRABHU

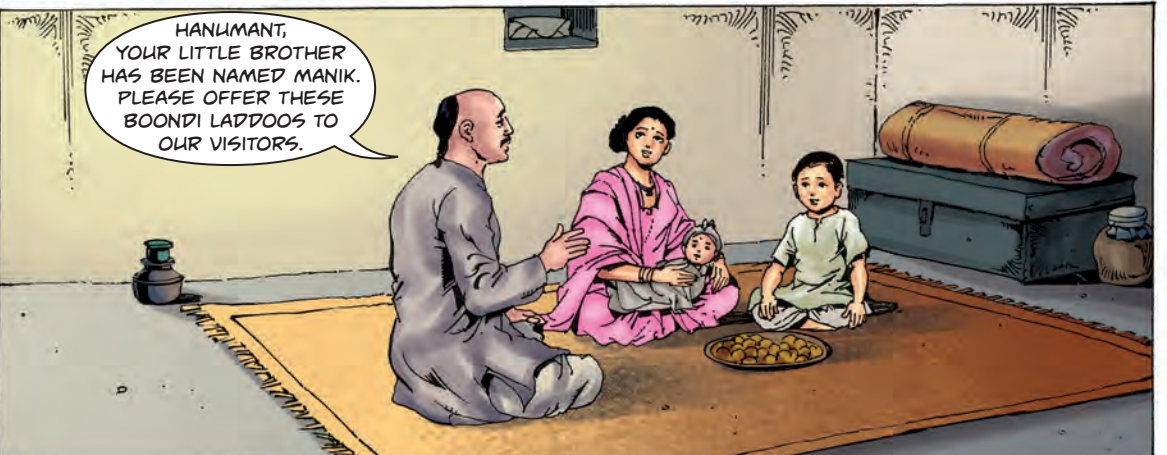
A RARE SPIRITUAL GEM



IN THE VILLAGE OF LADWANTI IN NORTH KARNATAKA, THERE LIVED A PIOUS MAN NAMED MANOHAR NAIK HARKUDE AND HIS WIFE, BAYADEVI. ONCE, ON THE AUSPICIOUS DAY OF SHRI RAM NAVAMI IN 1817...

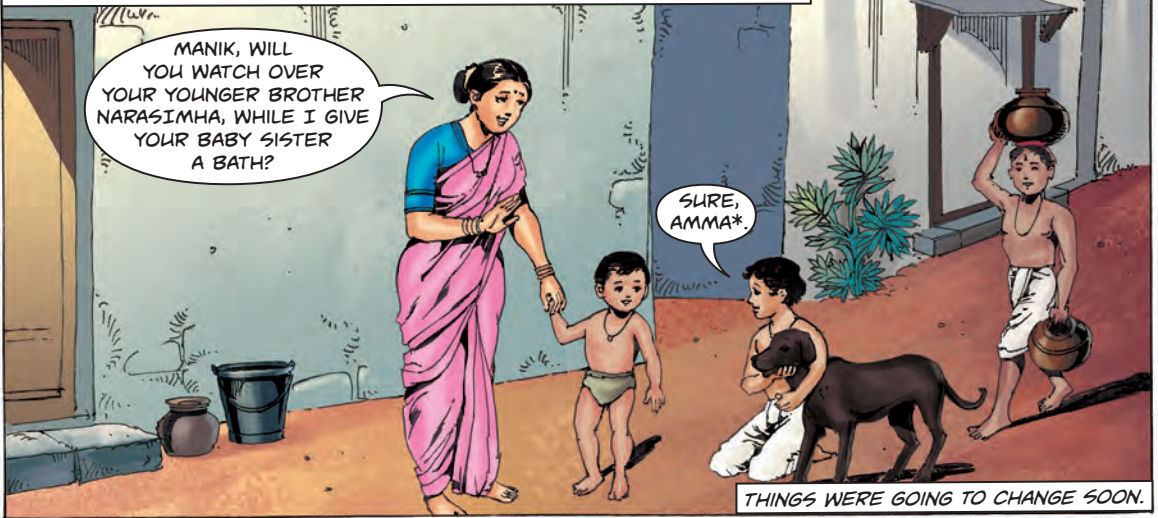


A FEW DAYS LATER, ON 22 DECEMBER, 1817, WHEN THE PEOPLE OF LADWANTI WERE CELEBRATING DATTA JAYANTI[^] -

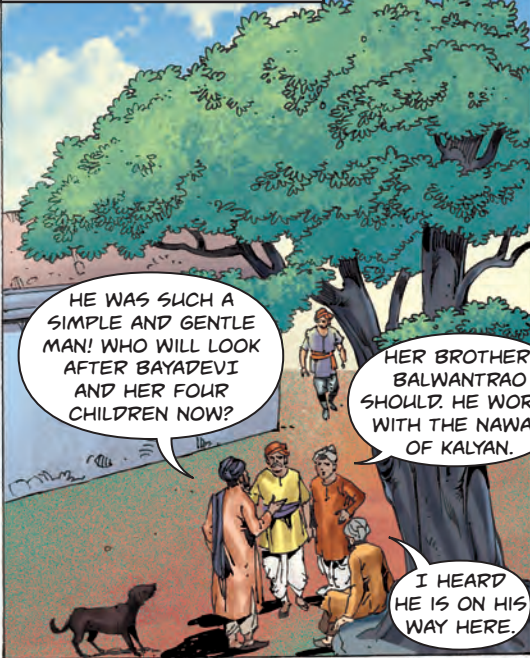


*LORD DATTATREYA IS THE INCARNATION OF BRAHMA, VISHNU AND MAHESH.
[^]DATTA JAYANTI IS THE BIRTHDAY OF LORD DATTATREYA.

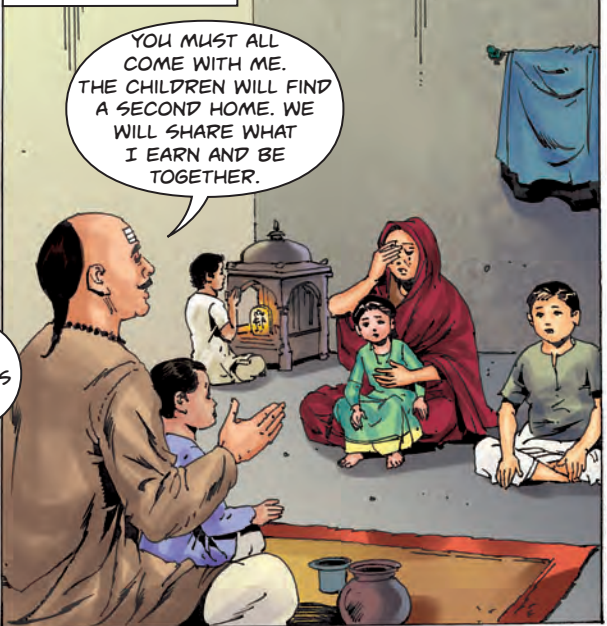
THE BOY, MANIK, WAS LOVING, CAREFREE AND ALWAYS READY WITH A SMILE.



MANIK HAD JUST TURNED FIVE YEARS OLD, WHEN MANOHAR NAIK PASSED AWAY.



SOON, BALWANTRAO APPARAO KULKARNI REACHED HIS SISTER'S HOME FROM BASAVAKALYAN, A NEIGHBOURING TOWN.

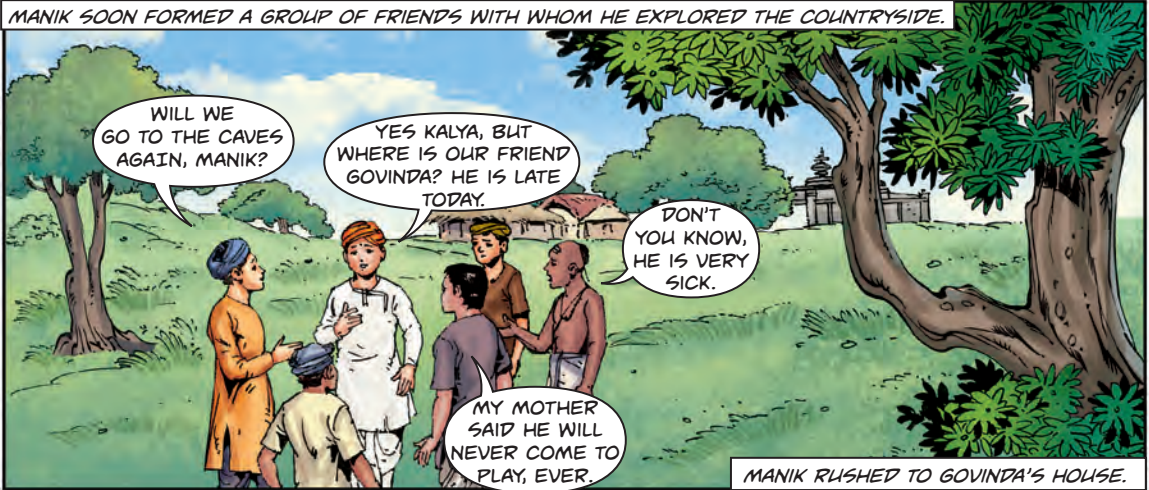


SO, THE FAMILY LEFT FOR KALYAN.

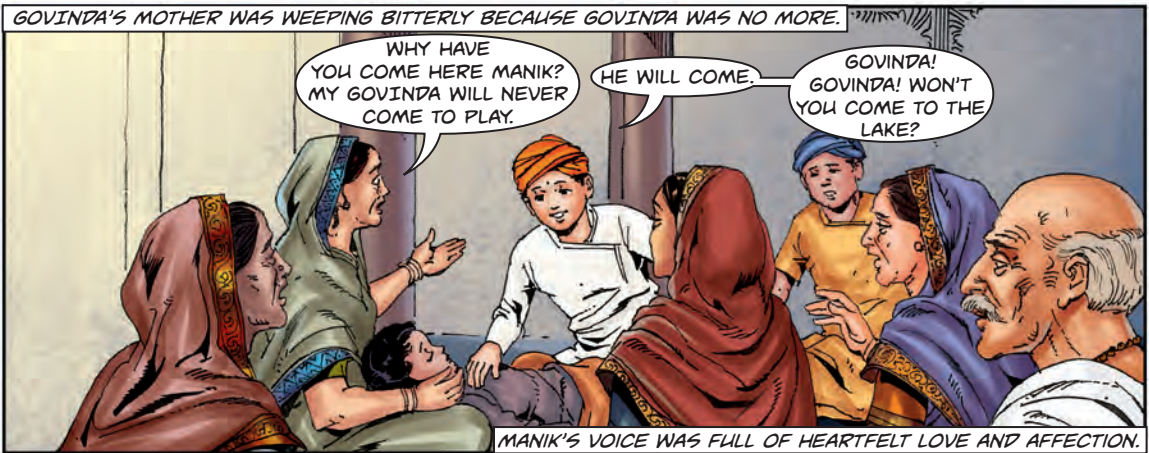


*MOTHER
^MATERNAL UNCLE

MANIK SOON FORMED A GROUP OF FRIENDS WITH WHOM HE EXPLORED THE COUNTRYSIDE.



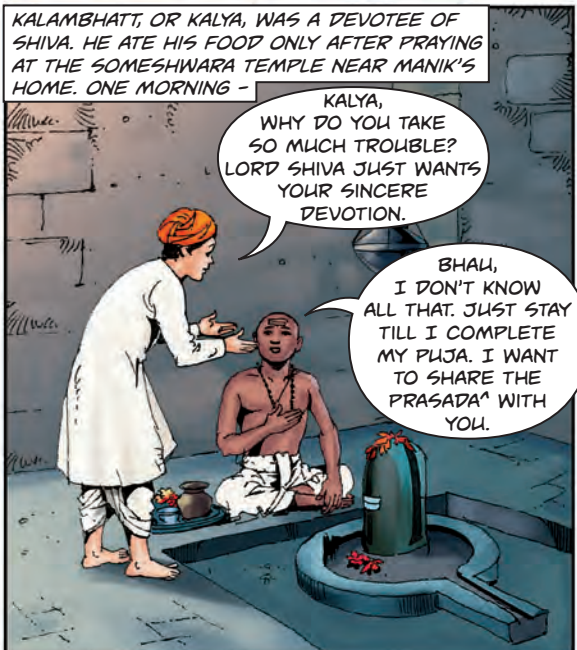
GOVINDA'S MOTHER WAS WEEPING BITTERLY BECAUSE GOVINDA WAS NO MORE.



SUDDENLY, GOVINDA GOT UP.



KALAMBHATT, OR KALYA, WAS A DEVOTEE OF SHIVA. HE ATE HIS FOOD ONLY AFTER PRAYING AT THE SOMESHWARA TEMPLE NEAR MANIK'S HOME. ONE MORNING -



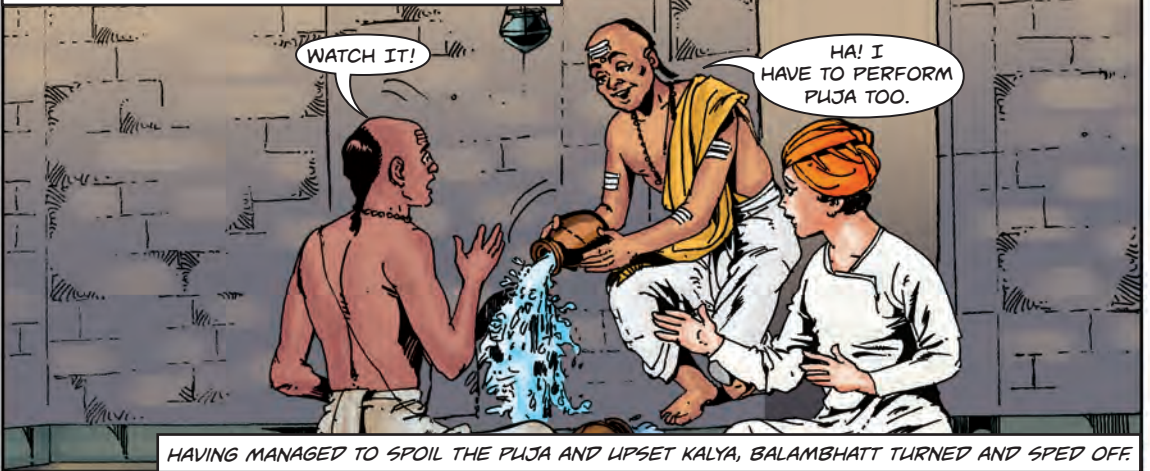
*BROTHER

¹FOOD OFFERED TO A DEITY OR SAINT

UNKNOWN TO HIM BALAMBHATT, HIS JEALOUS NEIGHBOUR, WAS PLOTTING TO RUIN HIS PEACE.

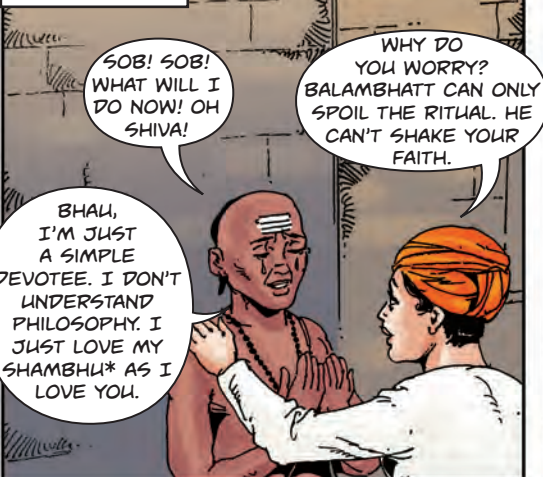


AS SOON AS KALYA COMPLETED ALL HIS PREPARATIONS, BALAMBHATT CAME BUSTLING AND CARELESSLY OVERTURNED HIS POT OF WATER ON THE SHIVALINGA.



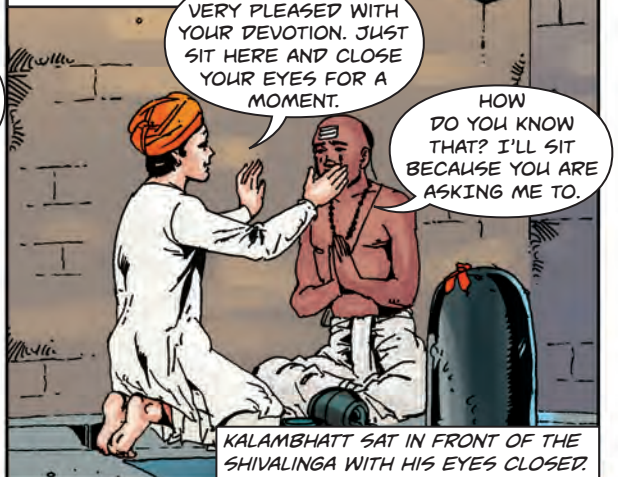
HAVING MANAGED TO SPOIL THE PUJA AND UPSET KALYA, BALAMBHATT TURNED AND SPED OFF.

KALYA WAS VERY SAD. HE WAS TOO POOR TO BUY ANYTHING MORE.



*ANOTHER NAME OF SHIVA

MANIK THOUGHT FOR A WHILE.



KALAMBHATT SAT IN FRONT OF THE SHIVALINGA WITH HIS EYES CLOSED.

AFTER A FEW MOMENTS MANIK ASKED HIM TO OPEN HIS EYES. SHIVA WAS RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM!



OVERCOME WITH EMOTION, KALYA BOWED DOWN. WHEN HE RAISED HIS HEAD, SHIVA WAS GONE.



SOON, IT WAS TIME FOR MANIK'S UPANAYANAM*. ON THE DAY OF THE CEREMONY, HIS MAMA GAVE HIM THE GAYATRI MANTRA*.



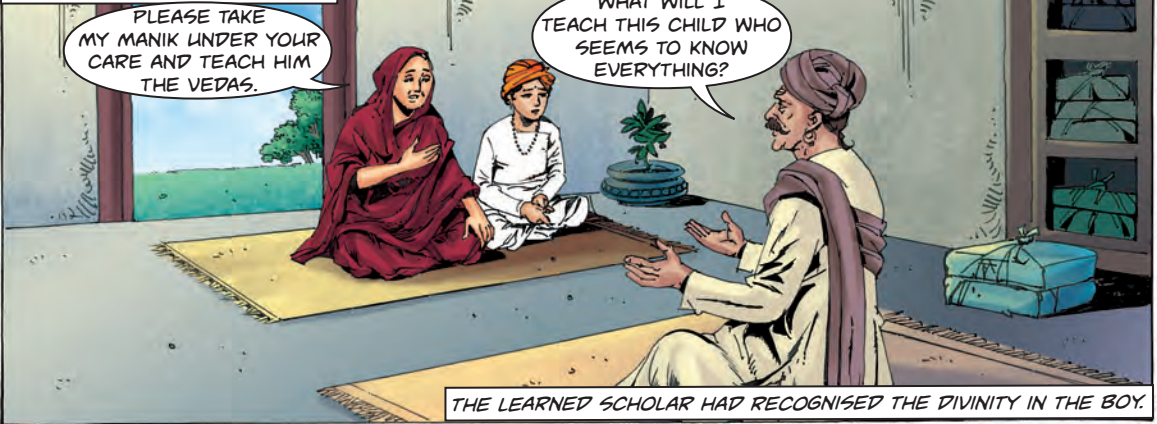
AS SOON AS MANIK RECEIVED THE GAYATRI MANTRA, HE STARTED TO CHANT MANY SACRED VERSES FROM THE UPANISHADS AND THE VEDAS. THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED. THEY DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO TEACH THIS YOUNGSTER WHO LOOKED SO CAREFREE AND YET WAS WISE BEYOND HIS YEARS.



*A RITUAL AFTER WHICH BOYS ARE TAUGHT THE SCRIPTURES

*A SACRED PRAYER

AFTER THE CEREMONY, BAYADEVI TURNED TO BHALCHANDRA DIKSHIT OF HALLIKKHED, THE MOST RENOWNED VEDIC SCHOLAR OF THAT TIME.



HIS UNCLE ENROLLED HIM AT A SCHOOL BUT MANIK WAS HARDLY EVER THERE.



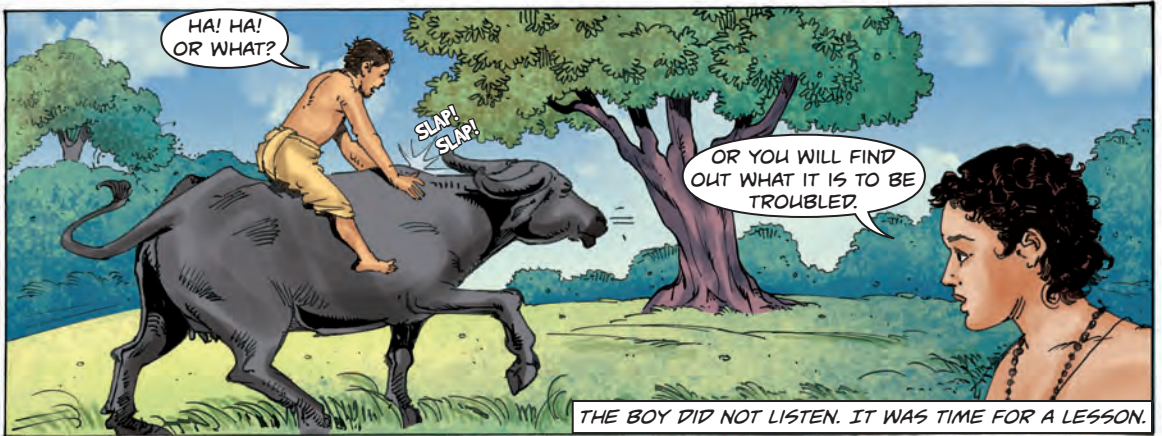
WHEN HANUMANTRAO SPOKE TO MANIK -



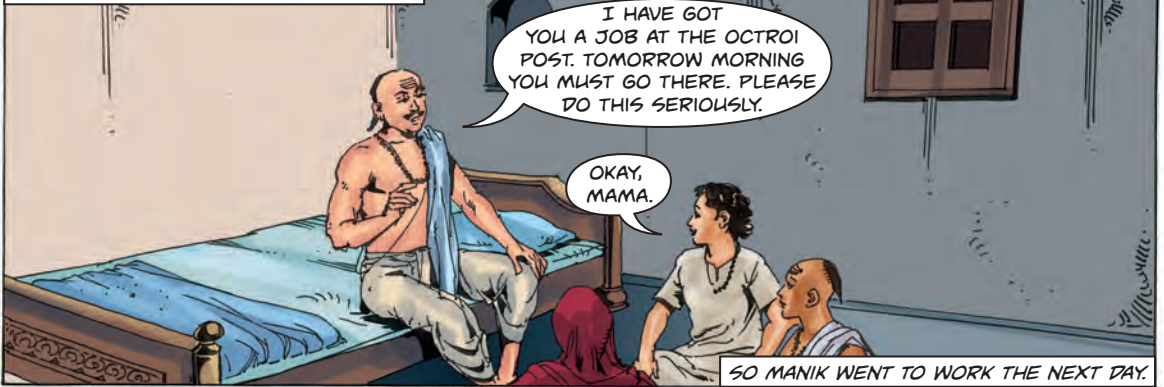
LORD DATTATREYA IS SAID TO HAVE HAD 24 TEACHERS. HE LEARNT FROM THE FIRE AND THE EARTH, FROM ANIMALS LIKE BEES AND SERPENTS AND FROM ORDINARY HUMANS AROUND HIM. THE CHILD MANIK ALSO WANDERED THROUGH WOODS GATHERING WISDOM RIGHT FROM NATURE.



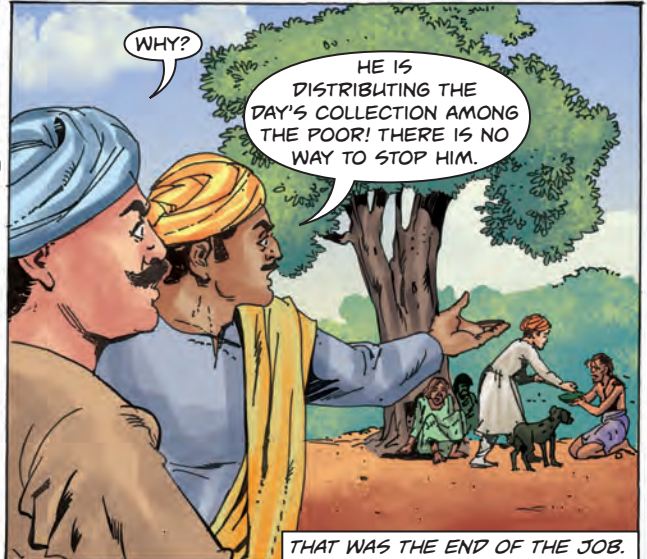
ONE DAY, YOUNG MANIK SAW A BOY TROUBLING A PREGNANT BUFFALO.



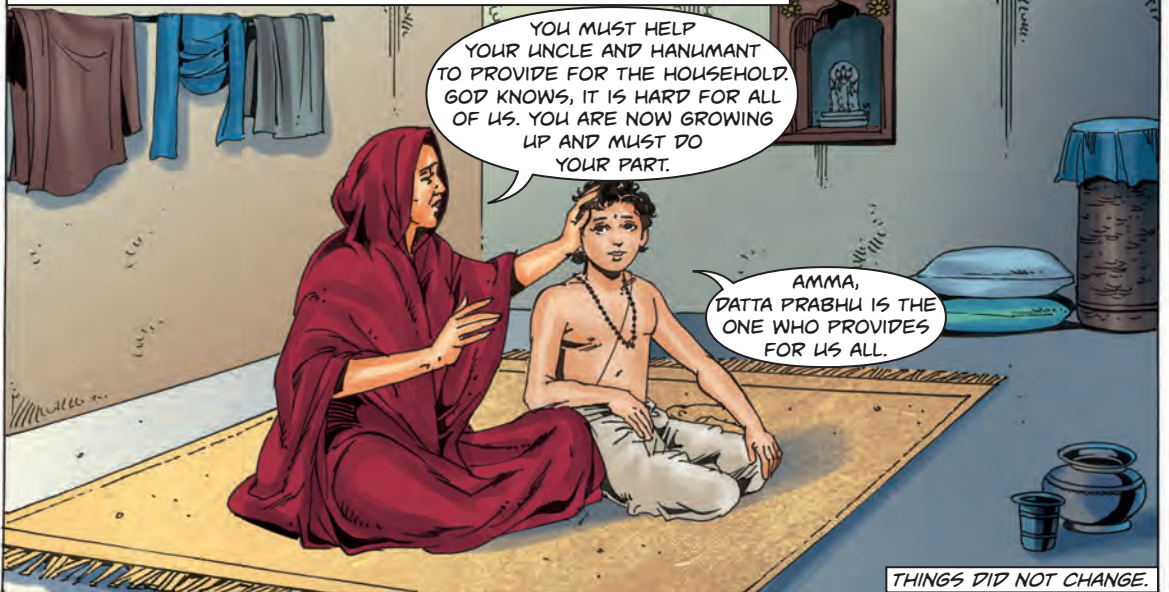
BALWANTRAO WANTED HIS NEPHEW TO SETTLE DOWN TO A NORMAL LIFE. HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT MANIK, WHO WAS ALMOST 15 YEARS OLD NOW.



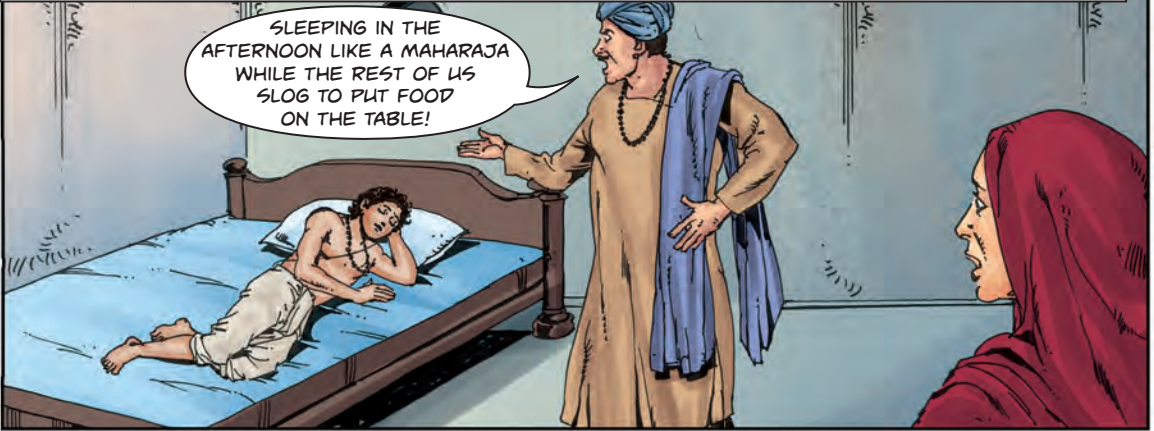
IN THE EVENING, HIS UNCLE CAME TO FETCH HIM.



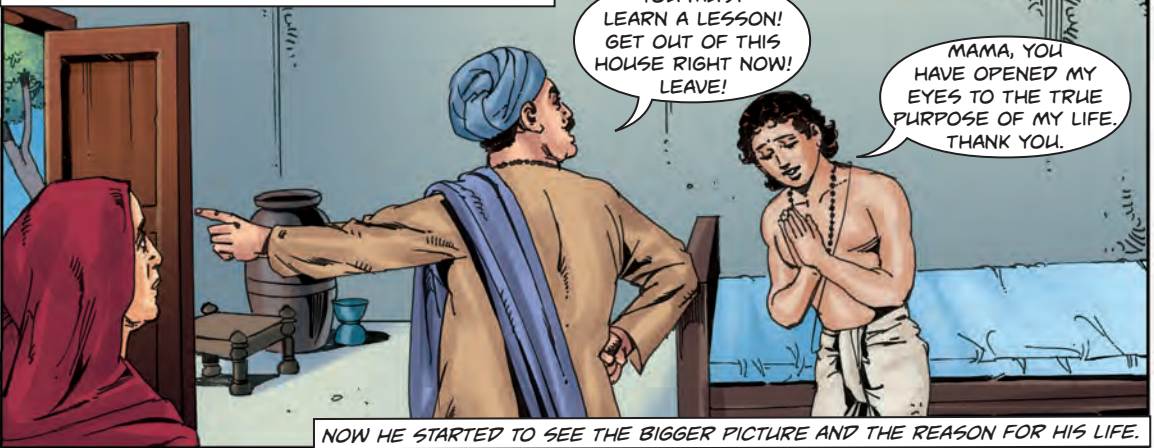
MANIK NOW SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME ALONE, LOST IN HIS OWN THOUGHTS.



ONE AFTERNOON, MANIK WAS SLEEPING ON HIS UNCLE'S BED. BALWANTRAO SAW HIM AND LOST HIS TEMPER.



MANIK GOT UP AND QUIETLY LISTENED TO HIS UNCLE.



NOW HE STARTED TO SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE AND THE REASON FOR HIS LIFE.

MANIK PROSTRATED BEFORE HIS UNCLE AND DISCARDED HIS WORLDLY POSSESSIONS. AS HE LEFT, HE SANG -



HE WAS JUST 16 YEARS OLD.

NOW, WANDERING FREELY, MANIK REACHED AMRITAKUND, A QUIET AND BEAUTIFUL PLACE. HE WAS HAPPIEST IN THE FOREST AND ALL ALONE.



*WHO BUT GOD CAN BE THE SAVIOUR? WHY TAKE FALSE CREDIT WHEN HE IS THE DOER? 'SERVANT' AND 'MASTER', BOTH WORDS ARE SHALLOW. MANIK SAYS, THE LORD PROTECTED HIM IN HIS MOTHER'S WOMB AND WILL CONTINUE TO GUARD HIM ALWAYS.

WHEN HE WAS THIS ALONE IN THE FOREST, A STRANGE AND UNKNOWN BAIRAGI* CAME AND SPOKE TO HIM.



I HAVE NOW GIVEN YOU DEEKSHA*. REMEMBER, YOU ARE A MESSENGER WHO HAS TO SPREAD THE ULTIMATE TRUTH FOR THE GOOD OF THE PEOPLE.

ALREADY A REALISED SOUL, MANIK WAS NOW A 'JEEVANMUKTA', LIBERATED EVEN WHEN ALIVE.



MANIK SADGURUNATHA JAGVYAPAK ATRISUTA! DATTA BRAHMACHARI REY BRAHMACHARI TRIBHUVNAT TUJHI FERI!**

THE BAIRAGI WAS NO OTHER THAN DATTATREYA HIMSELF.

PEOPLE SLOWLY GOT TO KNOW ABOUT THE YOUNG SAINT, SHRI MANIK PRABHU MAHARAJ, AS HE WAS NOW CALLED. HE WAS SOMETIMES SEEN IN THE AREA AROUND AMRITAKUND. HE COMPOSED MANY SONGS IN MARATHI, HINDI, KANNADA, URDU AND SANSKRIT IN HIS MOMENTS OF ECSTASY. THESE ARE CALLED ABHANGAS. HIS ABHANGAS WERE FULL OF BHAKTI (DEVOTION) TO THE VARIOUS FORMS OF GOD AND ALSO CONVEYED THE VEDANTIC MESSAGE OF ONENESS OF THE SUPREME BEING. HIS FAME SPREAD FAR AND WIDE. PEOPLE FLOCKED TO HIM. HE KEPT MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE.



ONE DAY, LATE IN THE EVENING, HE REACHED A PLACE CALLED CHALAKAPURA.



WHAT A BEAUTIFUL TEMPLE OF PAVANPUTRA HANUMAN. I THINK THE PRIEST HAS LEFT FOR THE DAY. I WILL SLEEP HERE TONIGHT.

THERE WERE MANY ROBBERS IN THE FORESTS. IT WAS SAID THAT LORD HANUMAN ASSUMED A VERY FIERCE FORM AT NIGHT WHICH ORDINARY MEN COULD NOT SEE. SO, PEOPLE CAME HERE ONLY DURING THE DAY.

*ONE WHO IS FREE FROM WORLDLY ATTACHMENTS
*INITIATION

**O DATTA, WHO IS PRESENT EVERYWHERE, SON OF ATRI AND THE GURU OF MANIK, YOU ROAM THE THREE WORLDS FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL BEINGS.

MANIK CAREFULLY HUNG HIS BELONGINGS ON HANUMAN'S SHOULDER AND WENT TO SLEEP.



NEXT MORNING, THE PRIEST AND OTHER ATTENDANTS CAME IN.

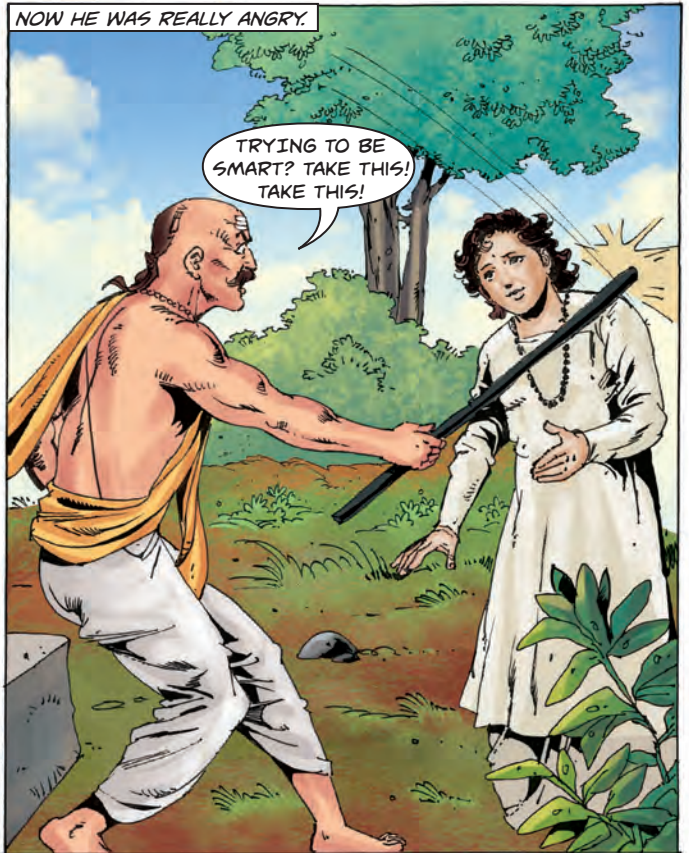


THEY NOTICED MANIK PRABHU SLEEPING CLOSE BY.



THE PRIEST THOUGHT MANIK PRABHU WAS MAKING FUN OF HIM.

NOW HE WAS REALLY ANGRY.



THEN A MIRACLE OCCURRED!



THE PRIEST REALISED HIS MISTAKE AND APOLOGISED.

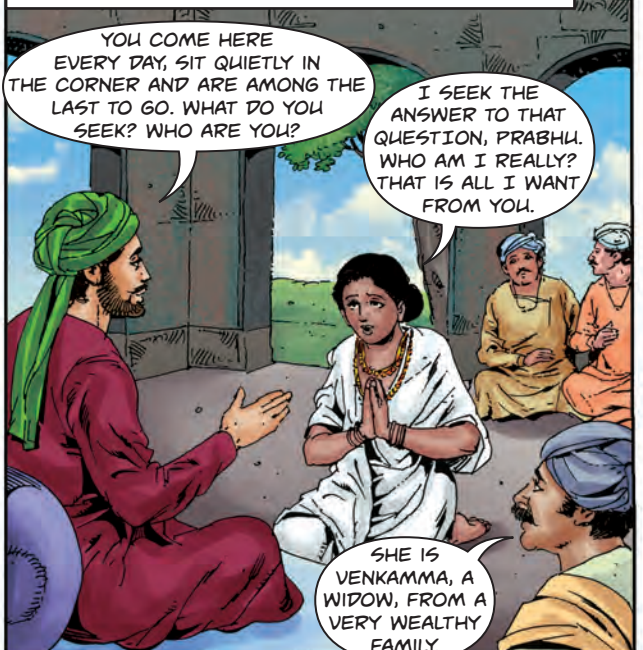


THE YEARS PASSED. PRABHU WENT TO MAILAAR FOR THE ANNUAL FAIR OF KHANDOBA*. EVERY DAY THERE WAS A THRONG OF PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO MEET HIM AND HEAR HIM SPEAK.



THEN THEY WOULD TAKE PRASADA AND LEAVE.

AFTER A FEW DAYS HE REALISED THAT A WOMAN WAS THERE, ATTENDING EVERY DAY, WITHOUT FAIL.



SHE IS VENKAMMA, A WIDOW, FROM A VERY WEALTHY FAMILY.

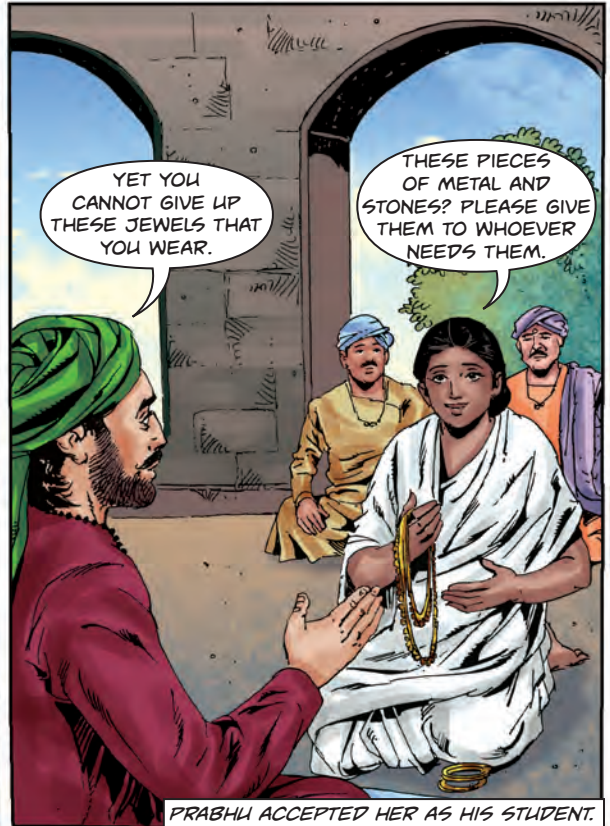
*KHANDOBA IS A MANIFESTATION OF SHIVA

HE IMMEDIATELY SAW HER SPIRITUAL STATURE BUT HE TESTED HER.



RETURN TO YOUR FAMILY FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.

I HAVE NOWHERE TO GO EXCEPT YOUR LOTUS FEET. ACCEPT ME AS YOUR DISCIPLE.



YET YOU CANNOT GIVE UP THESE JEWELS THAT YOU WEAR.

THESE PIECES OF METAL AND STONES? PLEASE GIVE THEM TO WHOEVER NEEDS THEM.

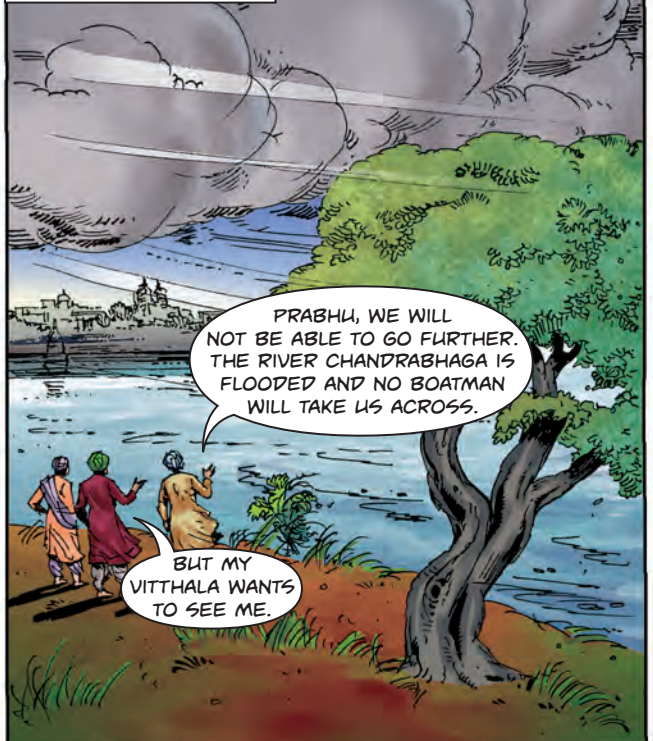
PRABHU ACCEPTED HER AS HIS STUDENT.

IN TIME, AFTER SEVERE AUSTERITIES, VENKAMMA BECAME A YOGINI OF THE HIGHEST SPIRITUAL ORDER. SHE ASSISTED PRABHU IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS LIFE'S MISSION DURING HER SPIRITUAL JOURNEY.



SHE IS SAID TO BE THE INCARNATION OF ADI SHAKTI OF LORD DATTAREYA AND IS ALSO KNOWN AS MADHUMATI SHYAMALA.

ONCE PRABHU WAS ON HIS WAY TO THE VITTHALA TEMPLE IN PANDHARPUR.



PRABHU, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GO FURTHER. THE RIVER CHANDRABHAGA IS FLOODED AND NO BOATMAN WILL TAKE US ACROSS.

BUT MY VITTHALA WANTS TO SEE ME.

SUDDENLY, A BOATMAN APPEARED.

I WILL
TAKE YOU
ACROSS.

THERE
WAS NO ONE
ELSE HERE. FROM
WHERE DID
HE COME?

ONCE THEY REACHED THE OTHER SHORE, MANIK PRABHU HURRIED ON.

THE BOATMAN
AND HIS BOAT HAVE
VANISHED! WHO WAS
HE?

WE ARE
ALL DIRTY AND
WET. LET US GO
TO THE TEMPLE
TOMORROW.

I MUST GO
AS I AM. I CANNOT
WAIT TO MEET
VITTHALA.

MANIK PRABHU WAS OVERCOME WITH JOY ON
SEEING VITTHALA IN THE TEMPLE. AS HE RAN
FORWARD TO TOUCH THE IDOL -

YOU DIRTY
MAN! DON'T YOU
DARE PUT YOUR
FILTHY HANDS ON
THE LORD!

THOSE
GARLANDS! A
MIRACLE!

WEREN'T
THEY AROUND
VITTHALA A
MOMENT
AGO?

MANIK PRABHU
BHAUVACHA
BHUKELA, AANIK NA
LAGE KAA*

FORGIVE
ME! I WAS
TOO PROUD!

PEOPLE WERE AMAZED BY THE MIRACLE
BUT MANIK PRABHU WAS NOT CONCERNED
WITH ANYTHING OTHER THAN HIS VITTHALA.

*MANIK'S LORD IS HUNGRY FOR DEVOTION AND REQUIRES NOTHING ELSE.

THEREAFTER, MANIK PRABHU SET OFF ON A PILGRIMAGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY.



EVERYWHERE HE WENT, PEOPLE FLOCKED TO HIM. HE TAUGHT THEM THAT ALL PATHS LEAD TO THE SAME GOAL.

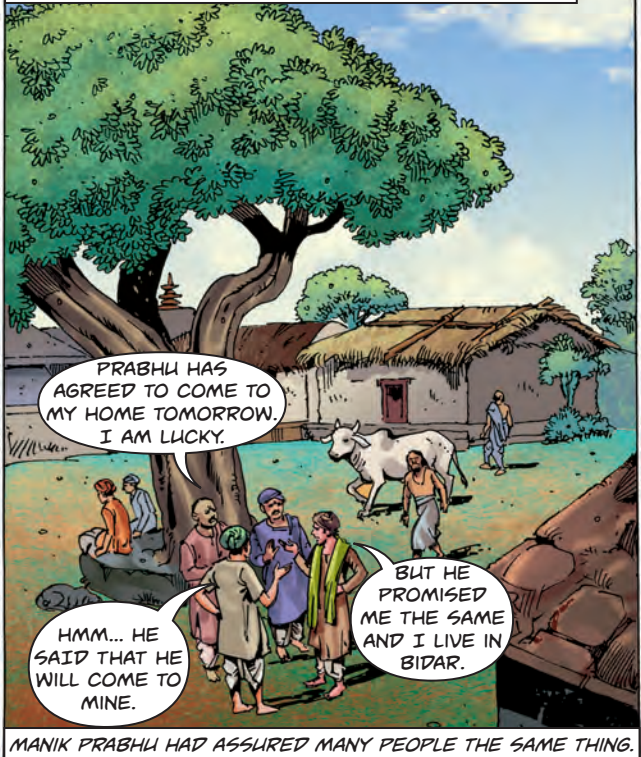


SLOWLY, THE VISIONARY TEACHINGS OF THIS GREAT SAINT STARTED TO TAKE A CONCRETE SHAPE AS THE SAKALAMATA SAMPRADAYA, A WAY OF LIFE WHERE PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS, WITH DIVERSE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, FIND A WAY TO REALISE THE TRUTH. HE EXPLAINED THE COMPLEX TEACHINGS OF THE UPANISHADS IN SIMPLE WAYS TO THE COMMON MAN...

...LIKE IN THE ABHANGA WHICH MEANS:
*THE AATMAN OR BRAHMAN OF THE UPANISHADS IS ONE IN ALL BEINGS. FOR US, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SHAIVA (WORSHIPPER OF SHIVA) OR A VAISHNAVA (WORSHIPPER OF VISHNU) SINCE THEY SEEK THE SAME GOD IN DIFFERENT FORMS. WE SHOULD RESPECT ALL PATHS AS THEY ULTIMATELY LEAD TO THE SAME GOAL.

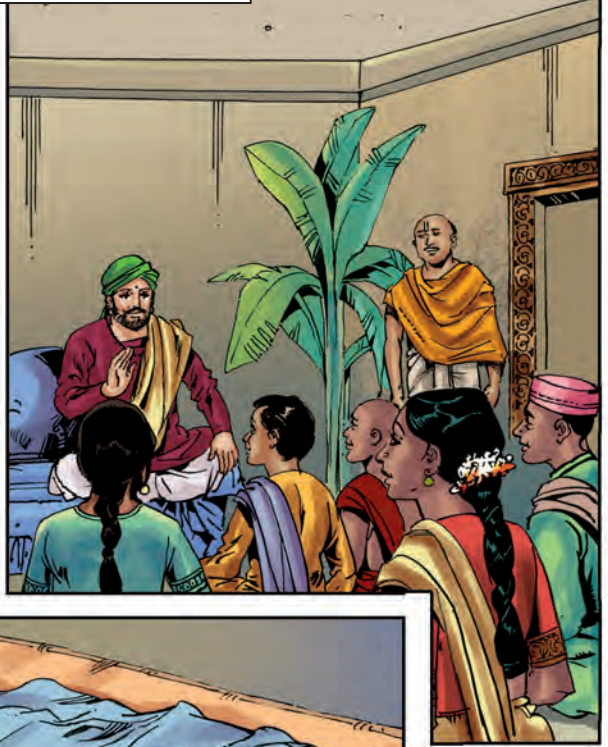


AFTER THIS TIRTH YATRA HE RETURNED TO BIDAR. ONE EVENING, IN A PLACE CALLED JHARNI, NEAR BIDAR -



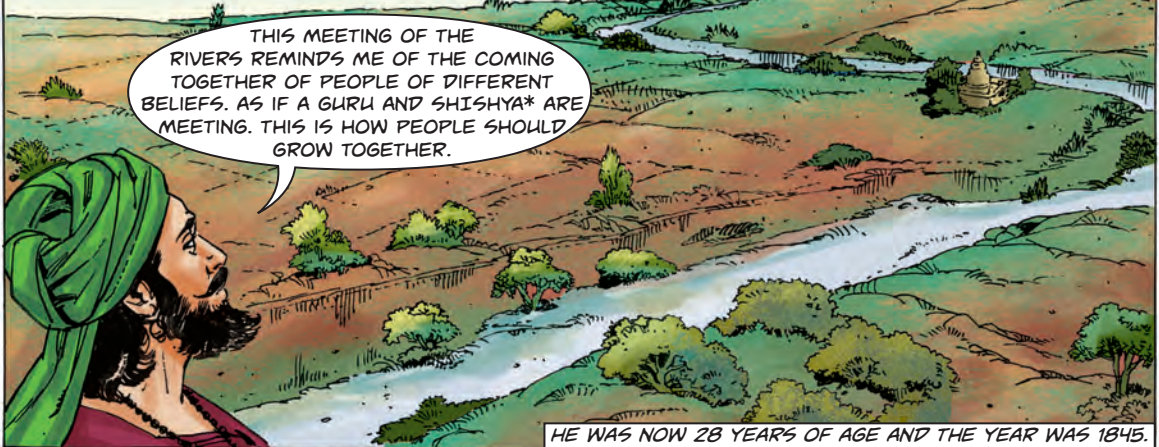
MANIK PRABHU HAD ASSURED MANY PEOPLE THE SAME THING.

THE NEXT DAY, SHRI PRABHU VISITED THE HOMES OF ALL THE PEOPLE HE HAD PROMISED HE WOULD, ALL AT THE SAME TIME. MEANWHILE, OTHER PEOPLE SAW HIM ASLEEP IN HIS ROOM.



IT WAS ANOTHER MIRACLE.

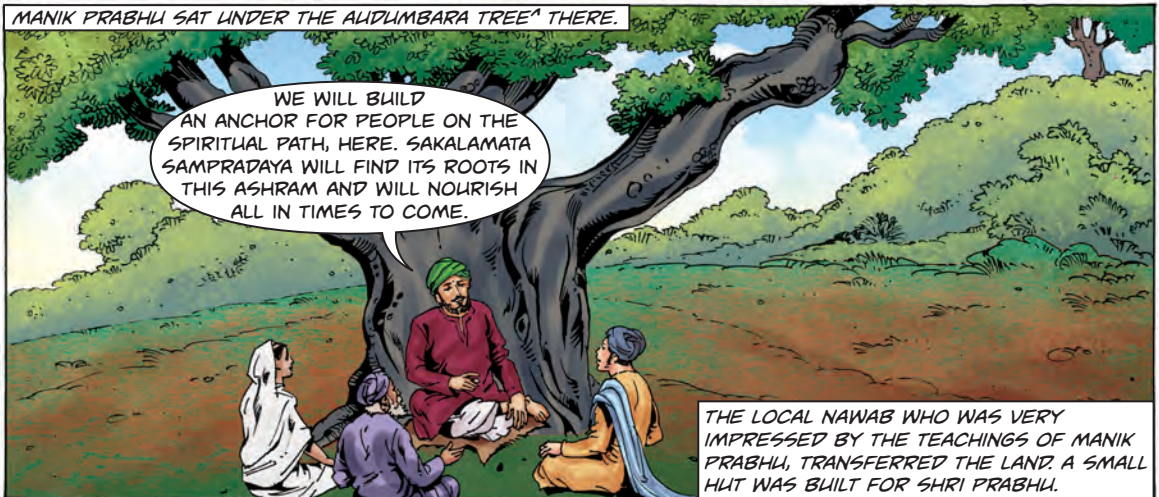
ONCE, MANIK PRABHU WAS TRAVELLING FROM BIDAR TO KALYAN, WHEN HE STOPPED AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE RIVULETS GURUGANGA AND VIRAJA. HE SAW THE RUINS OF AN ANCIENT, YET BEAUTIFUL SHIVA TEMPLE.



THIS MEETING OF THE RIVERS REMINDS ME OF THE COMING TOGETHER OF PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT BELIEFS. AS IF A GURU AND SHISHYA* ARE MEETING. THIS IS HOW PEOPLE SHOULD GROW TOGETHER.

HE WAS NOW 28 YEARS OF AGE AND THE YEAR WAS 1845.

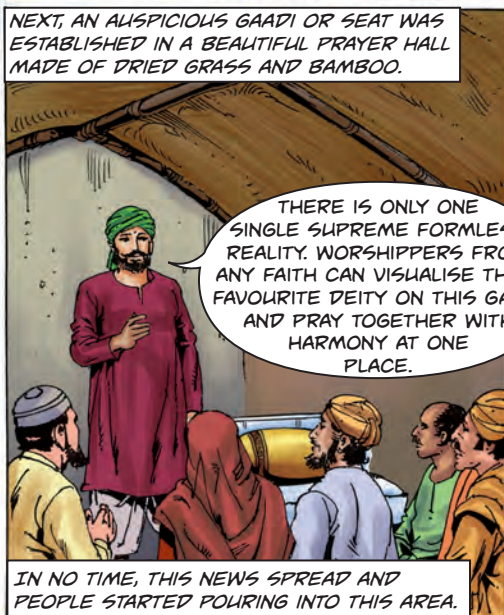
MANIK PRABHU SAT UNDER THE AUDUMBARA TREE[^] THERE.



WE WILL BUILD AN ANCHOR FOR PEOPLE ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH, HERE. SAKALAMATA SAMPRADAYA WILL FIND ITS ROOTS IN THIS ASHRAM AND WILL NOURISH ALL IN TIMES TO COME.

THE LOCAL NAWAB WHO WAS VERY IMPRESSED BY THE TEACHINGS OF MANIK PRABHU, TRANSFERRED THE LAND. A SMALL HUT WAS BUILT FOR SHRI PRABHU.

NEXT, AN AUSPICIOUS GAADI OR SEAT WAS ESTABLISHED IN A BEAUTIFUL PRAYER HALL MADE OF DRIED GRASS AND BAMBOO.



THERE IS ONLY ONE SINGLE SUPREME FORMLESS REALITY. WORSHIPPERS FROM ANY FAITH CAN VISUALISE THEIR FAVOURITE DEITY ON THIS GAADI AND PRAY TOGETHER WITH HARMONY AT ONE PLACE.

IN NO TIME, THIS NEWS SPREAD AND PEOPLE STARTED POURING INTO THIS AREA.

HIS MOTHER, BAYADEVI AND BROTHERS HANUMANTRAO AND NARASIMHA ALSO CAME TO HELP IN THIS EFFORT.



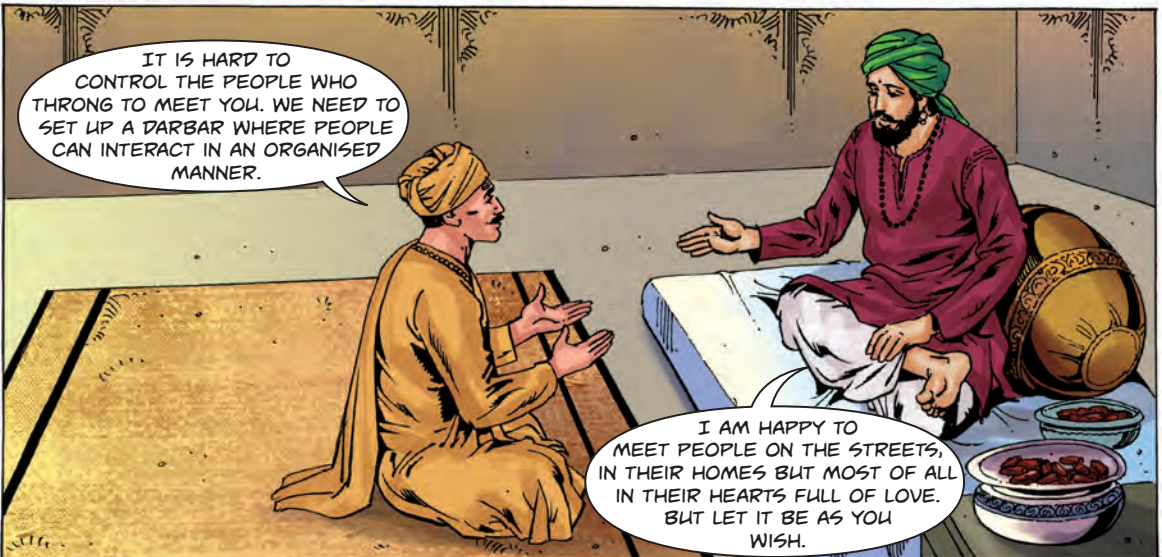
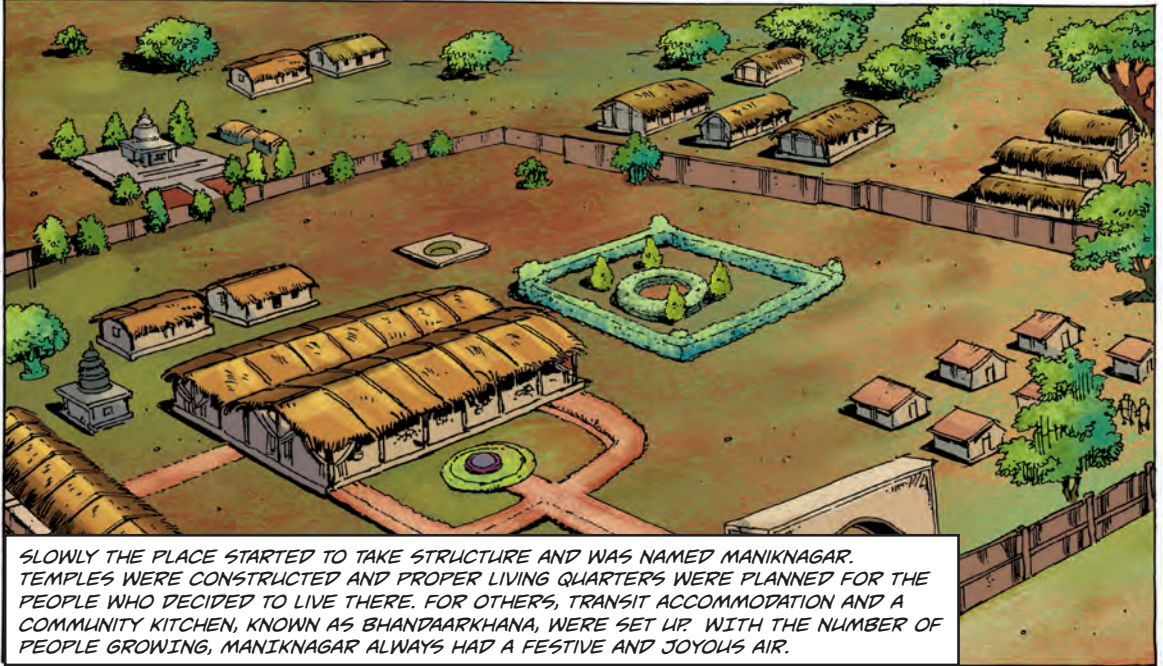
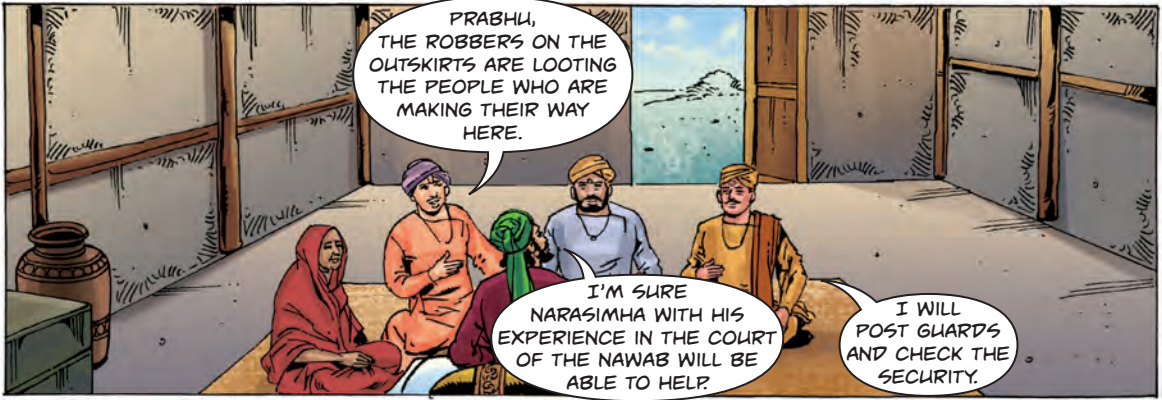
PEOPLE ARE BUILDING SHELTERS TO LIVE AND OPENING SHOPS ALL OVER.

I WILL ORGANISE THE CONSTRUCTION.

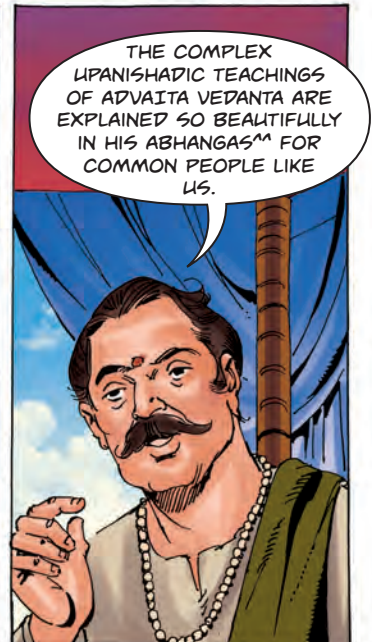
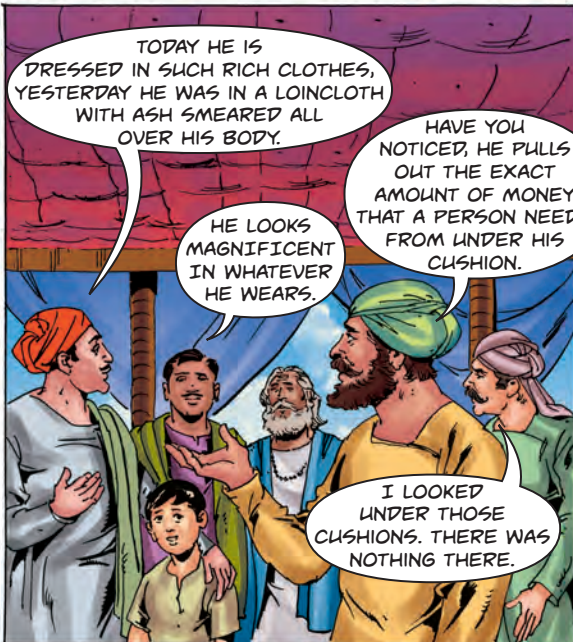
THANK YOU, HANUMANT DADA.

*STUDENT

[^]CLUSTER FIG TREE. THIS TREE IS CONSIDERED VERY HOLY.



SO, NARASIMHA TATYA* ORGANISED A DARBAR FOR DAILY DARSHAN* AND SATSANG**. A SIMPLE RAISED PLATFORM WAS CONSTRUCTED FOR SHRI MANIK PRABHU TO SIT. PEOPLE FLOCKED HERE WITH THEIR BIG AND SMALL CONCERNS AND ALWAYS FOUND AN ANSWER.



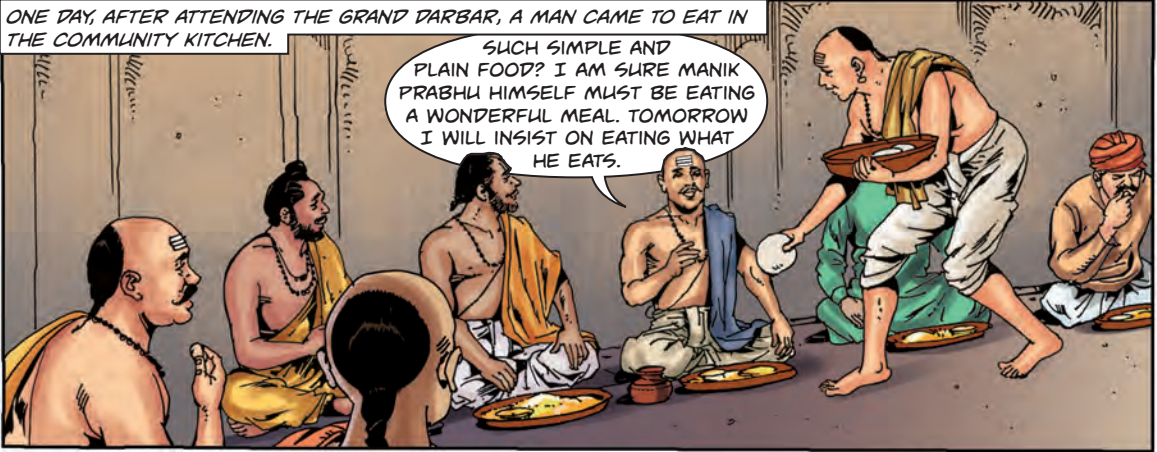
*RESPECTFUL WAY OF ADDRESSING AN ELDER

**A SPIRITUAL GATHERING

*THE OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW A HOLY PERSON OR IDOL

**THIS IS PART OF THE BIRUDDALI OR INVOCATION WHICH NARASIMHA TATYA COMPOSED.

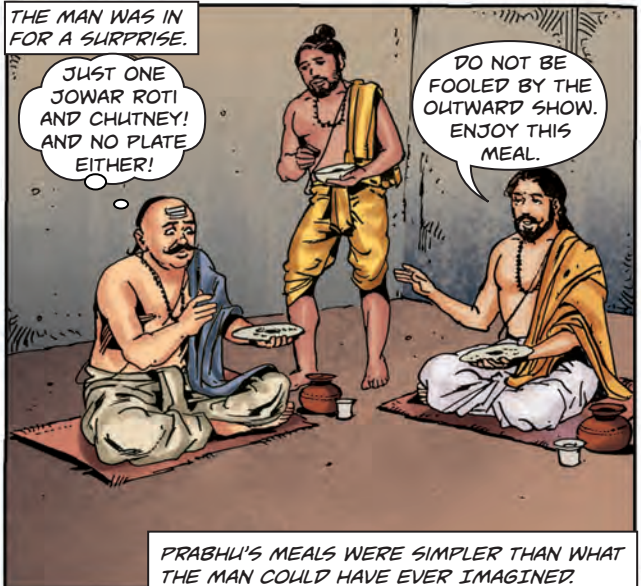
ONE DAY, AFTER ATTENDING THE GRAND DARBAR, A MAN CAME TO EAT IN THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN.



THE NEXT DAY -



THE MAN WAS IN FOR A SURPRISE.



ORDINARY HOUSEHOLDERS AND GREAT SCHOLARS, PEOPLE FROM THE NEXT VILLAGE AND THOSE FROM AS FAR AS KASHI, KASHMIR AND KANCHIPURAM, SAINTS AND SINNERS ALIKE, ALL FOUND SOLACE IN THE DARBAR OF SHRI MANIK PRABHU. AS THE GURU OR TEACHER, HIS MIND SAW THE INTENTIONS OF EACH AND HELPED THEM ACCORDINGLY. HE DISTRIBUTED WEALTH AS WELL AS HEALTH. NEEDLESS TO SAY, IN THE PRESENCE OF SUCH A SPIRITUALLY ADVANCED BEING, MANIKNAGAR GREW INTO A BEAUTIFUL PLACE.

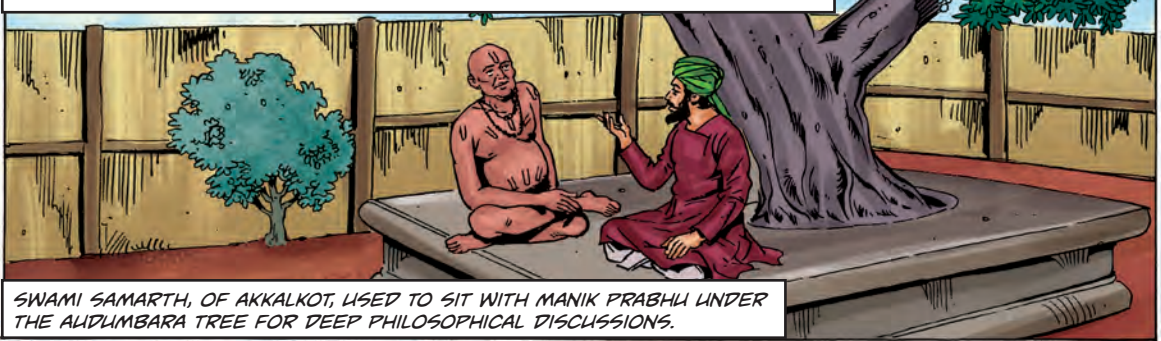


THE FIFTH NIZAM OF HYDERABAD, MEER AFZALUDDAULAH, SENT A NOBLE MAN TO MANIKNAGAR.



THE PEOPLE WERE WONDERSTRUCK WITH HIS INDIFFERENCE TO WEALTH.

HE WAS VISITED BY ALL THE GREAT SAINTS OF THAT TIME. THE HEAD OF THE SRI SHANKARACHARYA MATHA AT SRINGERI, THE HEAD OF THE HAMPI MATHA, SHRI BRAMHA CHAITANYA MAHARAJ OF GONDAVALE AS WELL AS SHRI AKKALKOT SWAMI MAHARAJ, WERE SOME OF THE PROMINENT VISITORS.



SWAMI SAMARTH, OF AKKALKOT, USED TO SIT WITH MANIK PRABHU UNDER THE AUDUMBARA TREE FOR DEEP PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSIONS.

ONE DAY, A YOUNG FAKIR VISITED THE DARBAR.



NARASIMHA TATYA WAS ENGROSSSED IN A DISCUSSION.

HE PUT A HANDFUL OF COINS INTO THE FAKIR'S BOWL, STILL ABSORBED IN HIS CONVERSATION.



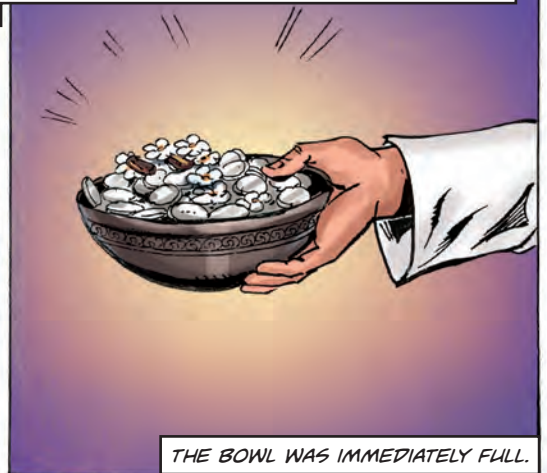
HE KEPT PUTTING IN COINS AND TALKING.

SUDDENLY HE REALISED WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND STOPPED WITH A START -



SURPRISED, HE TURNED TO SHRI PRABHU.

MANIK PRABHU HAD ALREADY GAUGED THE SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT OF THE YOUNG FAKIR. WITH A SMILE HE PUT TWO DATES AND A FEW FLOWERS INTO THE BOWL.



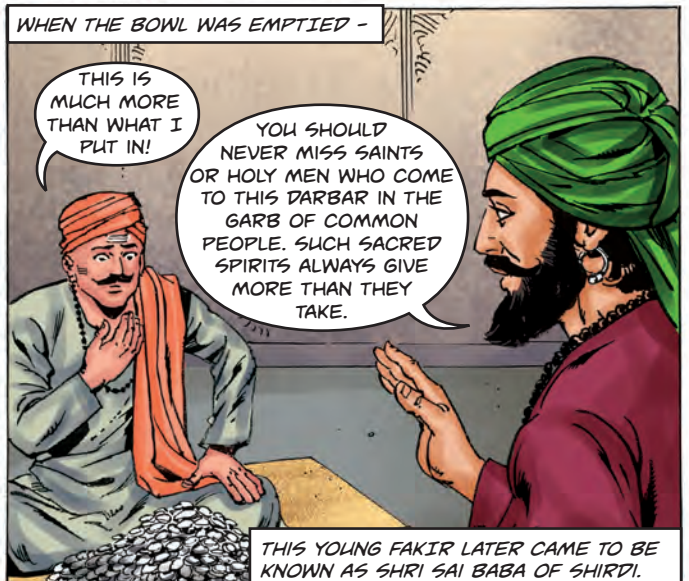
THE BOWL WAS IMMEDIATELY FULL.

THE FAKIR WAS DELIGHTED.



TAKING THE DATES AND THE FLOWERS, THE FAKIR LEFT.

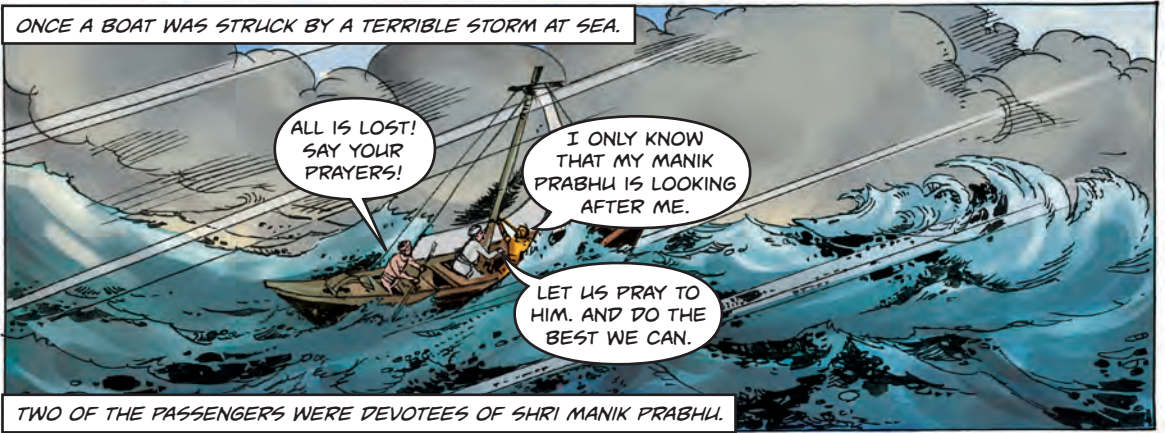
WHEN THE BOWL WAS EMPTIED -



THIS YOUNG FAKIR LATER CAME TO BE KNOWN AS SHRI SAI BABA OF SHIRDI.

*THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD

ONCE A BOAT WAS STRUCK BY A TERRIBLE STORM AT SEA.



TWO OF THE PASSENGERS WERE DEVOTEES OF SHRI MANIK PRABHU.

FACING THE WINDS BRAVELY, THE TWO MEN HELD THE SAILS. ALL THE WHILE, THEY SANG ONE OF THE ABHANGAS THAT MANIK PRABHU HAD COMPOSED.



SOON THE WINDS STOPPED HOWLING AND THE SUN SHONE GENTLY.

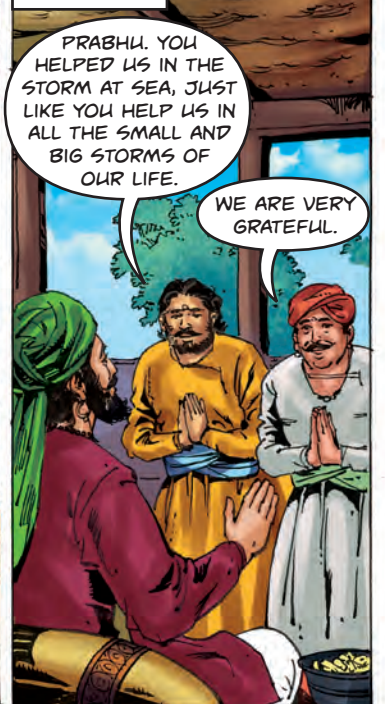


MEANWHILE, FAR AWAY IN MANIKNAGAR, MANIK PRABHU WAS SINGING THE SAME ABHANGA SITTING UNDER HIS FAVOURITE AUDUMBARA TREE.



ANOTHER UNEXPLAINED EVENT.

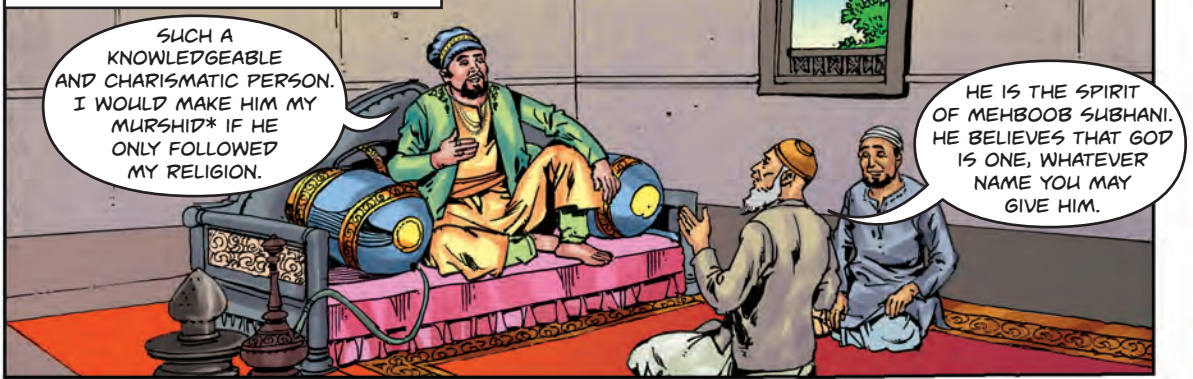
ONCE THEY LANDED SAFELY, THE TWO MEN RUSHED TO MANIKNAGAR.



*O MERCIFUL AND COMPASSIONATE DATTA, PLEASE COME RUNNING TO MY RESCUE.

*BAPPACHARYA (BAPPA) AND CHIMNYA BRAMHACHARI (CHIMNYA) WERE TWO VERY CLOSE DISCIPLES OF SHRI MANIK PRABHU.

GHULAM MUSTAFA KHAN, A TALLUKDAR IN THE NIZAM'S STATE, OFTEN CAME TO MANIKNAGAR. HE WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH SHRI MANIK PRABHU.



GHULAM MUSTAFA DECIDED TO TALK TO SHRI PRABHU ABOUT THIS.



ONE DAY -



*SPIRITUAL MASTER

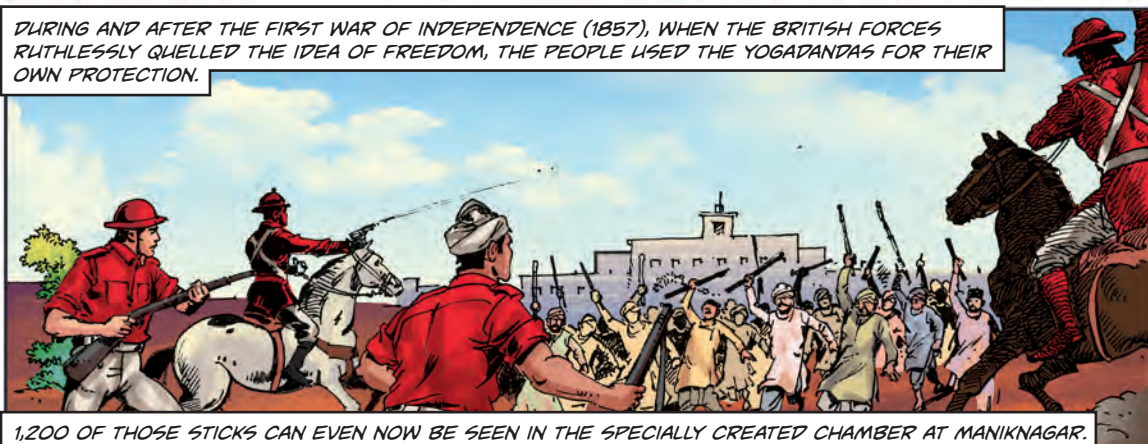
†A HIGH RANKING OFFICER IN A RULER'S COURT

DURING HIS NEXT DARBAR -

NO MAN HAS THE RIGHT TO ILL-TREAT ANOTHER AND NO ONE SHOULD MEEKLY SUBMIT TO THE OPPRESSOR. I AM GIVING THESE YOGADANDAS FOR YOUR PROTECTION. REMEMBER, ONCE THIS CRISIS IS OVER, YOU MUST RETURN THESE STICKS TO ME.



DURING AND AFTER THE FIRST WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1857), WHEN THE BRITISH FORCES RUTHLESSLY QUELLED THE IDEA OF FREEDOM, THE PEOPLE USED THE YOGADANDAS FOR THEIR OWN PROTECTION.



TARRA HUSSAIN KHAN WAS A FAMOUS MUSICIAN. ONCE, HE VISITED THE LOCAL NAWAB.

TARRA, YOU MUST GO TO MANIKNAGAR AND MEET PRABHU. HE HAS SUCH AN EAR FOR GOOD MUSIC.

REALLY! LET ME SHOW YOUR PRABHU WHAT REALLY GOOD MUSIC IS! I WILL GO IMMEDIATELY.

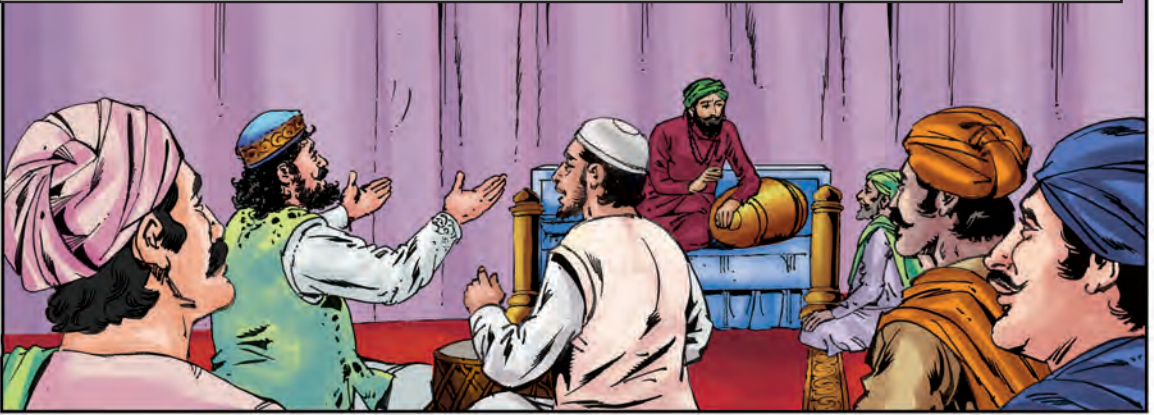


TARRA WAS QUITE PROUD OF HIS MUSICAL ABILITY.

IN THE DARBAR HE SAT DOWN TO SING ONE OF HIS FINEST RAGAS.



HOWEVER, SHRI PRABHU SEEMED VERY BUSY WITH OTHER PEOPLE AND PAID NO ATTENTION TO THE MUSIC.



TARRA WAS ANNOYED.



IMMEDIATELY, PRABHU TURNED TO HIM.



BY THE YEAR 1862, MANIKNAGAR WAS A WELL-KNOWN HERMITAGE. PEOPLE OF VARIOUS FAITHS WERE COMING TOGETHER IN A SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD AND LEARNING.



SHRI MANIK PRABHU GAVE A VERY ENIGMATIC ANSWER.

THERE WILL BE OTHERS
TO CARRY ON DATTA
PRABHU'S MISSION. MY
LORD IS THERE FOR
EVERYONE WHO
SEEKS.

CHANGE WAS AROUND THE CORNER.

WITHIN A SPAN OF SIX MONTHS HANLUMANT DADA, BAYADEVI, NARASIMHA TATYA AND VENKAMMA DEVI ATTAINED SAMADHI.

OH WHAT A
TERRIBLE,
TERRIBLE LOSS
THIS IS.

LORD KRISHNA
HAS SAID, THIS BODY IS
BUT A DRESS THAT THE SPIRIT
HAS WORN. YOU DO NOT GET
UPSET IF ANYONE CHANGES
THEIR CLOTHES? I TOO WILL
SHED THIS BODY
ONE DAY.

DON'T SAY
THAT, PRABHU.

THIS IS HOW
THE SAMSTHAN WILL
GROW AND HELP
SOCIETY.

HE HAD PUT INTO PLACE THE PLAN
FOR HIS ONWARD JOURNEY.

IN MAY 1865, SHRI PRABHU CALLED FOUR OF HIS CLOSEST DISCIPLES.

I WILL LEAVE
THIS MORTAL BODY
IN SIX MONTHS TIME.
NO, DO NOT GRIEVE.
THERE WILL BE A LOT
FOR ALL OF YOU
TO DO.

PRABHU, EVEN
IF WE CONTROL OUR
GRIEF WHAT ABOUT THE
PEOPLE?

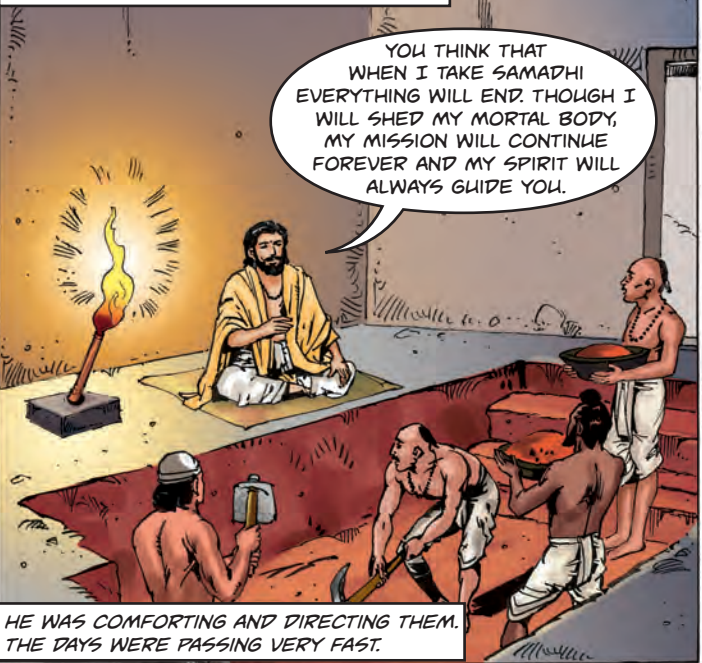
THEY WILL NOT
LEAVE YOU FOR EVEN
A MOMENT.



THAT IS WHY NONE OTHER THAN YOU FOUR SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS. YOU HAVE TO ASSIST ME ON MY ONWARD JOURNEY. NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY....

THE MEN WERE HEARTBROKEN BY THIS NEWS BUT SUCH WAS THEIR DEVOTION TO SHRI PRABHU, THEY SHOWED NO SIGN OF THEIR SORROW TO THE WORLD AT LARGE.

EVERY NIGHT, THE FOUR ASSEMBLED IN SHRI PRABHU'S HUT TO DIG HIS FINAL SAMADHI AS HE DIRECTED.



YOU THINK THAT WHEN I TAKE SAMADHI EVERYTHING WILL END. THOUGH I WILL SHED MY MORTAL BODY, MY MISSION WILL CONTINUE FOREVER AND MY SPIRIT WILL ALWAYS GUIDE YOU.

HE WAS COMFORTING AND DIRECTING THEM. THE DAYS WERE PASSING VERY FAST.

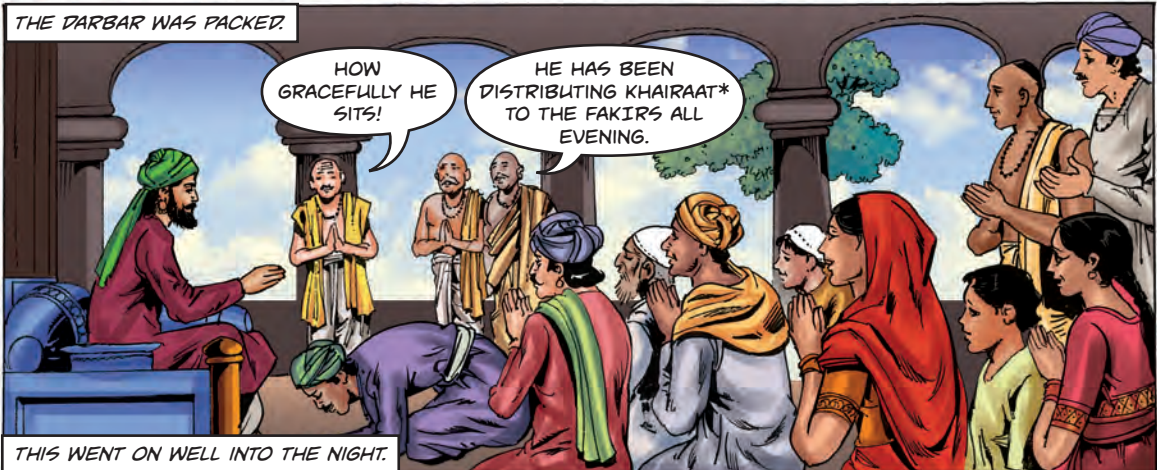
ON NOVEMBER 28, 1865, MANIKNAGAR WAS PACKED WITH PEOPLE FOR THE DATTA JAYANTI FESTIVAL AND FOR THE GYARAHVI SHAREEF OF MEHBOOB SUBHANI.



SUCH JOY AND PEACE! I SEEM TO BREATHE HAPPINESS IN MANIKNAGAR.

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN. LET US GO TO THE DARBAR TO SEE PRABHU.

THE DARBAR WAS PACKED.

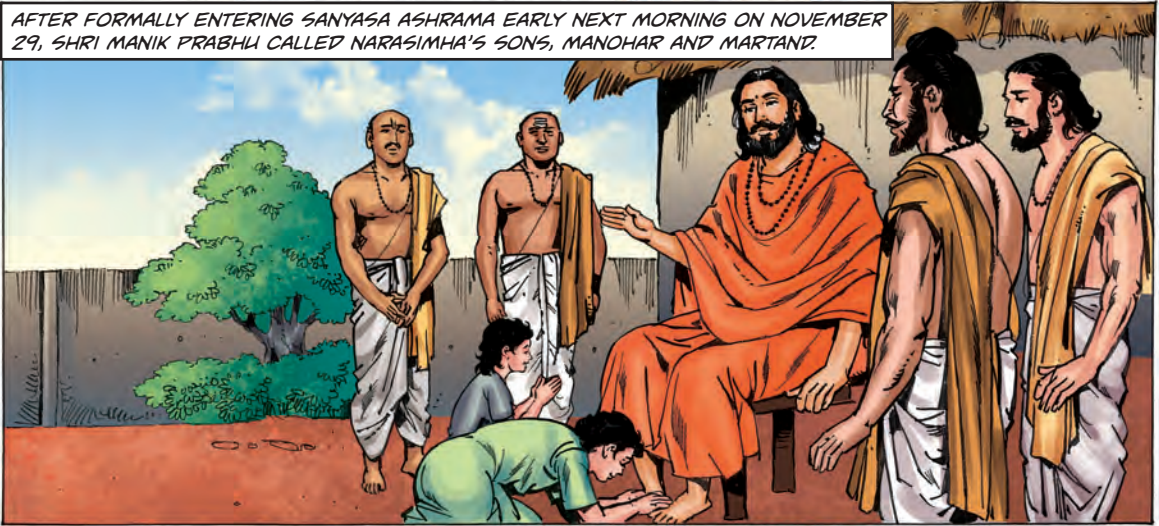


HOW GRACEFULLY HE SITS!

HE HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTING KHAIRAAT* TO THE FAKIRS ALL EVENING.

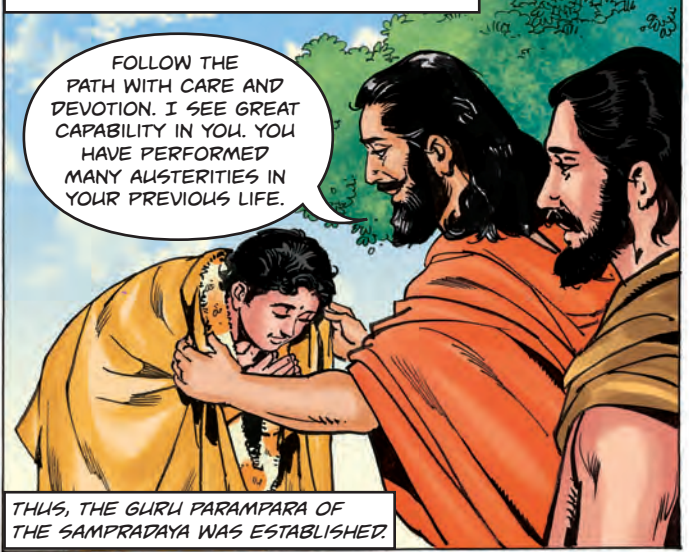
THIS WENT ON WELL INTO THE NIGHT.

AFTER FORMALLY ENTERING SANYASA ASHRAMA EARLY NEXT MORNING ON NOVEMBER 29, SHRI MANIK PRABHU CALLED NARASIMHA'S SONS, MANOHAR AND MARTAND.



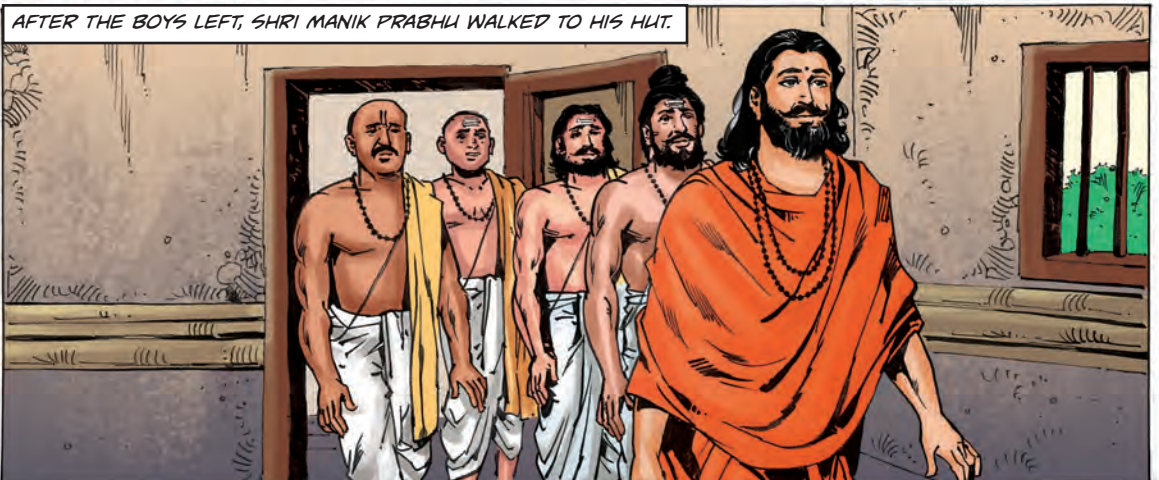
HE GARLANDED THE ELDER BOY, MANOHAR WHO WAS JUST SEVEN YEARS OLD.

HE THEN DRAPED HIS SHAWL AROUND THE BOY, DECLARING HIM TO BE THE NEXT HEAD OF THE SAMPRADAYA.



THUS, THE GURU PARAMPARA OF THE SAMPRADAYA WAS ESTABLISHED.

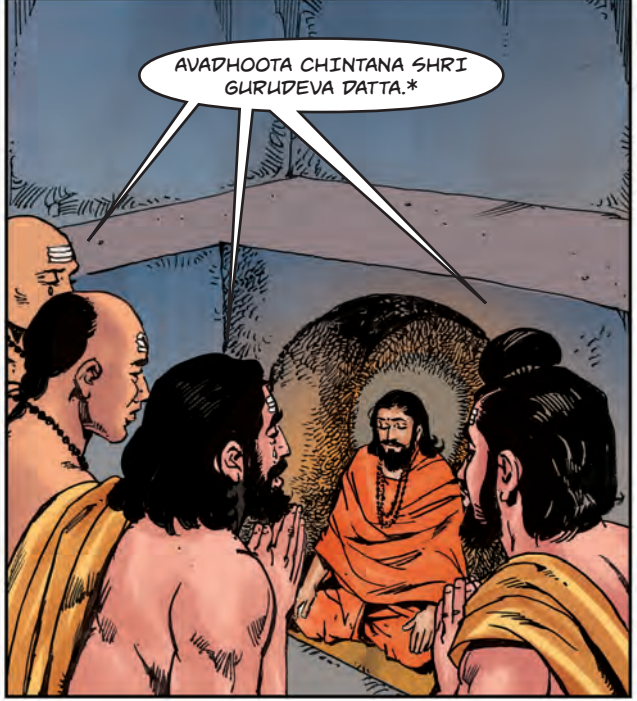
AFTER THE BOYS LEFT, SHRI MANIK PRABHU WALKED TO HIS HUT.



HE THEN ENTERED THE STATE OF MAHA-SAMADHI.



AVADHOOTA CHINTANA SHRI GURUDEVA DATTA.*

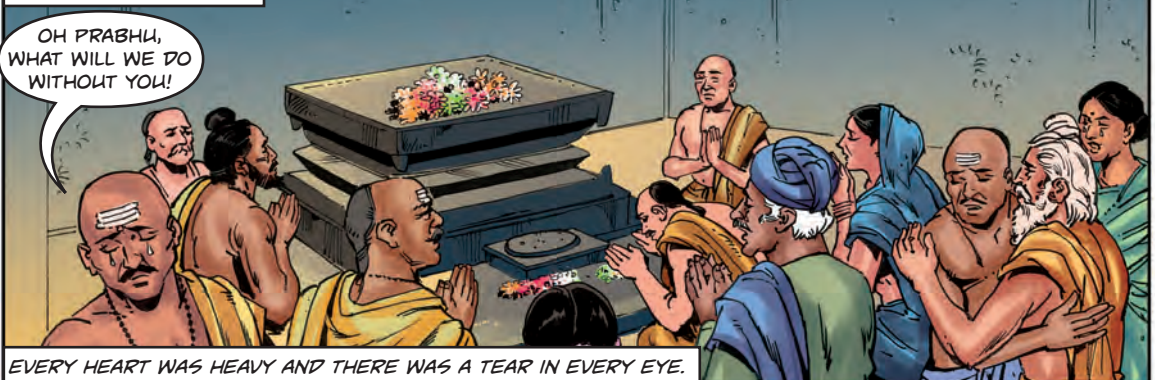


THE PEOPLE WERE UNAWARE OF HIS MAHA-SAMADHI FOR THE NEXT FOUR DAYS. ON THE FULL MOON NIGHT OF DATTA JAYANTI -



AFTER EVERYONE HAD EATEN, THE NEWS OF SHRI MANIK PRABHU'S MAHA-SAMADHI WAS DISCLOSED. THE DISTRAUGHT DEVOTEES BROKE OPEN THE DOORS OF PRABHU'S HUT ONLY TO FIND THE STONE STRUCTURE OF HIS DIVINE SAMADHI.

OH PRABHU, WHAT WILL WE DO WITHOUT YOU!



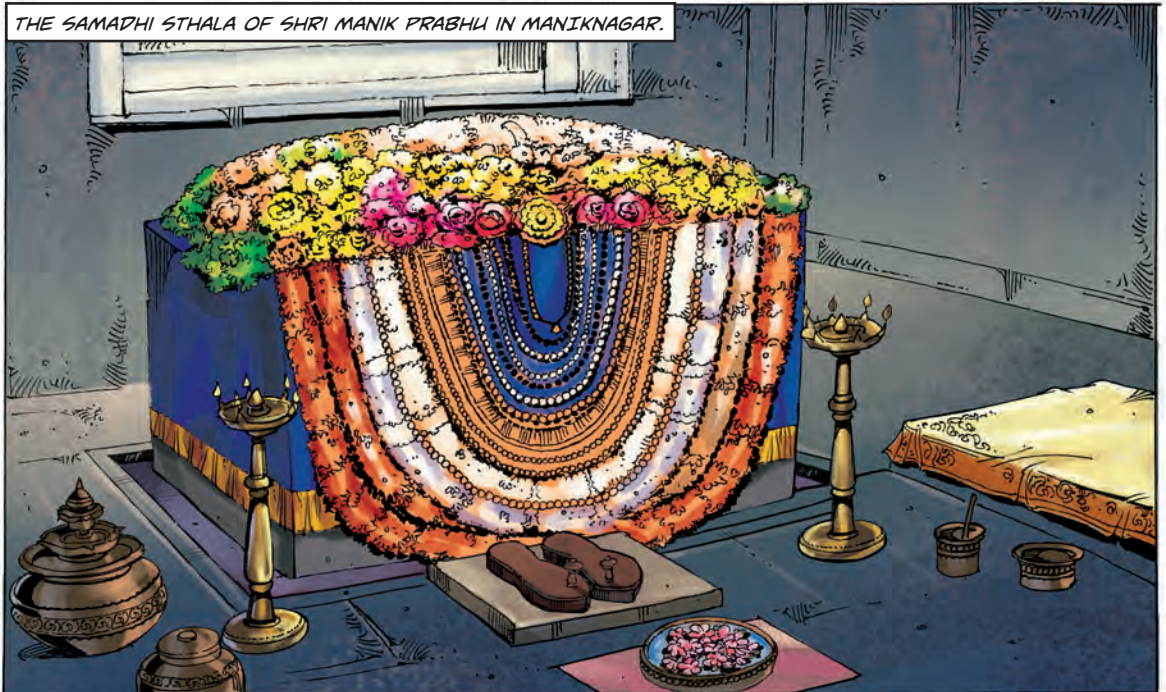
EVERY HEART WAS HEAVY AND THERE WAS A TEAR IN EVERY EYE.

*PRAISE BE TO THE ETERNAL GURU, DATTATREYA, THE ONE WHO HAS CLEANSED HIMSELF OF ALL WORLDLY AFFILIATIONS AND IMPURITIES.

SAKALMATA SAMPRADAYA STARTED BY SHRI MANIK PRABHU CONTINUES TO GROW AS AN ALL-EMBRACING SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY AS HE WANTED. THE SAMPRADAYA STRESSES THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENT PATHS OF WORSHIP BUT THEY ULTIMATELY LEAD TO THE SAME GOAL. THEREFORE, IT IS SENSIBLE TO FIND THE ONE COMMON FACTOR THAT UNITES ALL. A SUPREME SOUL ENCOMPASSES THE UNIVERSE AND THERE IS A SPIRITUAL UNITY OF ALL HUMANS. THIS BEAUTIFUL IDEA EASILY EMBRACES ALL RELIGIONS, CASTES, CREEDS, THE RICH AND POOR. THIS SAMPRADAYA AIMS TO BREAK THE BARRIERS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND BRING EVERYONE TOGETHER.

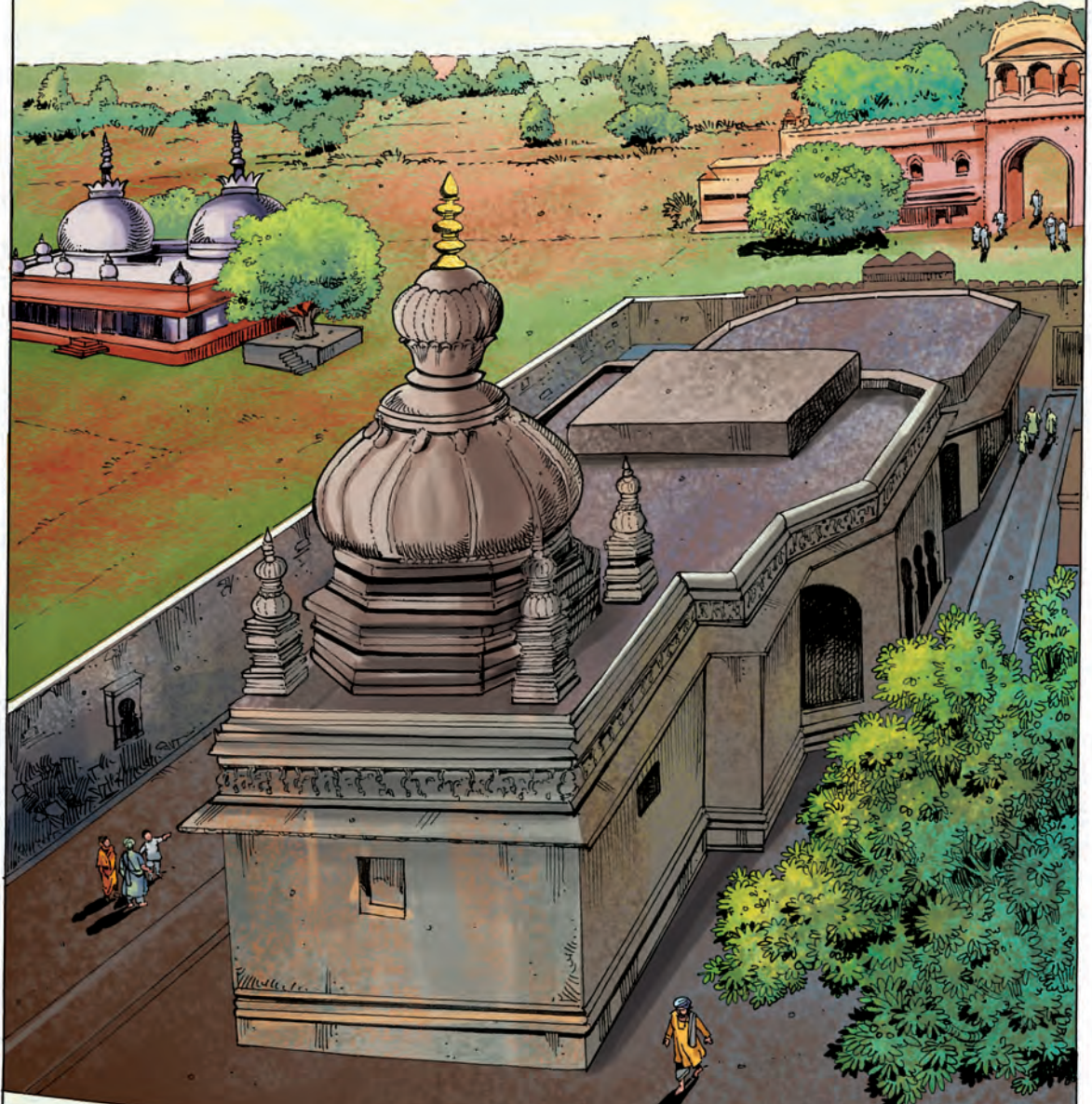


THE SAMADHI STHALA OF SHRI MANIK PRABHU IN MANIKNAGAR.



SHRI PRABHU'S SPIRITUAL MISSION WAS ABLY CARRIED FORWARD BY HIS ILLUSTRIOUS SUCCESSORS - SHRI MANOHAR MANIK PRABHU (1858-1877), SHRI MARTAND MANIK PRABHU (1861-1936), SHRI SHANKAR MANIK PRABHU (1895-1945) AND SHRI SIDDHARAJ MANIK PRABHU (1939-2009). PRESENTLY, THE SAMSTHAN IS HEADED BY SHRI DNYANRAJ MANIK PRABHU MAHARAJ WHO CONTINUES TO GUIDE AND LEAD THE SAMPRADAYA. WITH A MASTERLY COMMAND OVER THE PRINCIPLES OF ADVAITA VEDANTA, SHRI MAHARAJ JI IS SPREADING SHRI PRABHU'S MESSAGE OF 'SEEING THE ALMIGHTY IN EVERYTHING AND EVERYTHING IN THE ALMIGHTY' ACROSS THE GLOBE. TODAY, MANIKNAGAR IS A LIGHTHOUSE OF SPIRITUALITY AND HUMANISM AND A THROBBING CENTRE OF SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES.

THE VISION OF THE GREAT MASTER CONTINUES TO SHINE FORTH AND HIS WORK IS CARRIED ON AS HE HAD ALWAYS PLANNED.



MANIKNAGAR IS LOCATED IN THE BIDAR DISTRICT OF NORTH KARNATAKA AND DRAWS SPIRITUAL SEEKERS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.



GREAT THINKERS OF INDIA

As an ancient civilization and the birthplace of many religions, India has been witness to the lives of many thinkers whose philosophies have changed the course of history. The brilliance of these philosophers and their teachings is such that not even the passage of time could alter the relevance of their works.

On World Philosophy Day, Amar Chitra Katha brings you Great Thinkers of India, a collection of our existing titles Adi Shankara, Ramana Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Manik Prabhu. These philosophers led by their actions and have touched countless lives with their single-minded pursuit of the greater good. The stories of these thinkers became their lessons that live on to educate the world about the need for oneness among humanity and selfless service to one another.

